





CARITA
AND HOW SHE BECAME A
PATRIOTIC AMERICAN



“ WITH EASY GRACE HE STRUCK THE CHORDS AND SANG IT
THROUGH ” (see page 47)


Carita

AND HOW SHE BECAME
A PATRIOTIC AMERICAN

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ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN GOSS



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TO
MY MOTHER

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CARITA

And How She Became a Patriotic American

CHAPTER I

FROM THE BALCONY

“CARITA,” exclaimed her mother, joining the young girl on the balcony of their Mexican home, “have you forgotten we must make our plans this morning for your birthday luncheon? What are you finding of so much interest?”

“Nothing,” was the laughing response, as Carita flung back her hair that hung in a heavy black braid down her back; “that is,

nothing very special. You know I never grow tired of looking over the balcony. Awhile ago there was a circus parade with the funny clown and now there's a wedding in the church opposite. Such oceans of flowers! There's the bride now coming out of her carriage!" and she leaned eagerly over the railing.

For some time the two stood there watching the never-ending life below them: there was the Indian water carrier, so loaded that only his feet were visible; straggling men with bright blankets or zerapes round their shoulders; bare-footed women, their blue rebozos carelessly thrown over their heads, while wooden carts rattled by, interspersed with the inevitable popcorn man jingling his bell and followed by a host of ragged peon urchins, with lank black hair, smiling faces and merry black eyes. Carita loved it all, even to the pink cats and sheep painted by

devoted hands in an effort to enhance their beauty, and the occasional dog with lemons tied round his neck, a supposed cure for distemper.

Perhaps the setting had something to do with the charm; the snow-capped volcanoes, the picturesque balconies on pink adobe houses, suggestions of *patios*, glowing with masses of geraniums even in early January. Nothing in old Mexico was commonplace, from the women grinding corn for tortillas to the occasional glimpses one might catch of the young girl leaning, like Juliet, from her balcony, while her Romeo, in the street below, lightly fingered his guitar as he "played bear," which is Mexican for that kind of timid courtship.

Nearly twenty years before, Mrs. Andrews had come there as a bride and, though a loyal American, had yielded, as foreigners usually do, to the peculiar charm of the coun-

try. She chose for her home in the city a *vivienda* (the Mexican name for apartment) in an old monastery, preferring it to the houses built after the American style in other parts of the city. There was a fascination about the thick walls, the winding staircase, the ponderous doors with iron knockers that seemed a part of the life there. She had furnished the apartment with everything typical of the country: an old Mexican zerape, beautiful in its mellow colors, covered the lounge; carved tables, picked up in junk shops; while funny stone idols dug up in the streets, and belonging to the dim past, grinned from the corners of the room.

She would have been quite content in this land of "glorious sunshine" and quaint customs had it not been that her husband's business kept him months at a time, during the sugar grinding season, in a lonely part of the republic.

But with Carita it was different. The time was not far distant when she must be sent to the United States to finish her education—a year or two at the farthest. On the balcony that bright morning, with her mind full of the coming birthday party, Mrs. Andrews sighed at the separation each year was bringing nearer. With a quick look Carita turned.

“Mummy dear, are you really so sorry I’m growing up? To think, one week more and I shall be fifteen. We must surely have a grand celebration. Isn’t it nice Alice and Katharine are here from New York, two American girls at my party? Of course,” she continued reflectively, “we are all American girls—Carmen, Lucetta and Dolores, only we’re sort of Mexican, too. If I didn’t know I was ‘Americano,’ with a sure enough certificate, made out when I was sixteen days old, and giving my real, true name—Mar-

garet Andrews—I would be inclined to doubt it myself.”

Her mother smiled, the light words bringing to her mind recollections of the day when her husband, bending over the little crib, had whispered, “Carita,” Spanish for “well beloved.”

There had not been a day since when the child had not held them all her willing slaves, from her own special nurse, Francisca, to her adoring father and mother. What wonder she was a little spoiled and selfish.

But Carita was impatiently tapping her foot. “There’s one thing certain, this must be a real Mexican luncheon for the special benefit of Alice and Katharine. Dolores says this will be the first party, and they came a week ago.”

Her black eyes snapped and she went into a gale of laughter. “We’ll begin with fruit, of course, and mangoes, at that. It

will be fun to show them how to eat them."

"Yes," continued her mother equally interested, "and I'll have Clemencia make chicken tamales, not the kind they have in the States, and stuffed chillis—"

"And frijoles," interrupted Carita; "they never in the world will recognize beans under that name; besides, a salad with tortillas instead of crackers, and we must surely have American ice cream or the girls won't think it's a really, truly party." She paused a moment, then went on happily, "and a birthday cake with candles and love knots made in pink frosting. Oh, it will be the best luncheon: if I could only think of something to do afterwards, something that would make a lot of fun. I suppose I might have a Jack Horner's pie,—don't you remember Aunt Emily wrote about the big pie they had on her birthday, in the center of the table, with

ribbons to pull at every place?" She wrinkled her brows thoughtfully, "but that isn't Mexican, and probably Alice and Katharine have seen plenty of Jack Horner pies. Oh, dear, why can't I think of something?"

"Why not have a *piñate*?" suggested her mother. "As you say, the girls missed all the Christmas festivities, and I doubt if they know that a *piñate* is what the Mexican children have instead of a tree."

"The very thing!" was Carita's delighted answer. "We'll hang it in the *patio* and tell them it's a game of blind man's buff when we tie the handkerchiefs over their eyes. Imagine, *mi madre*, not knowing that a *patio* is a lovely court all full of flowers and plants and canary birds. I would hate to live in a house without a *patio*."

She paused a moment, then added a little wistfully, "Do you know, I think I shall be very homesick for Mexico when the time

comes for me to go to school? You see, I won't have any balcony nor you to spoil me nor Francisca to pick up after me. And the worst of it is, I don't want to be any different." She sighed. "I shouldn't like to be 'Margaret' all the time."

"But your father and I want you to have every advantage of education—you must go to some good school and, perhaps, afterwards make a specialty of your music. You will find there is no place like the United States, after all."

"Well, Mummy, we have two years together anyway before I must go away and be educated and, in the meantime, I don't want any better music than the band plays on Sundays in the Alameda."

With a quick impulsive gesture she rose, gave her mother an affectionate kiss and went out again on the balcony. The morning's chill had given place to the hot noon-

day glare, the wedding was over in the church opposite and the guests had dispersed. Carita leaned over the railing; by craning her neck she could see the little park up the street. It was filling with light-hearted groups of men, women and children gathering for their noonday meal of tortillas and frijoles. In the belfry opposite she watched the bells ringing for twelve o'clock; down town the shutters were being put up on all the windows for, after luncheon, every shop would remain closed for the afternoon siesta. In the clear light, the volcanoes stood out with sharp distinctness against the blue sky.

Her eyes grew soft and she whispered, "Two years in which I can be Carita and look over the balcony!"

CHAPTER II

HER MOTHER'S BRACELET

ALL was excitement the morning of Carita's birthday. Even Francisca and Clemencia, with smiling faces, added special greetings to the usual "*Buenos Días*," for was not their beloved Señorita fifteen years old on this—the twentieth of January?

As Carita entered the dining-room, her eyes shining with excitement, she gave a little cry of pleasure: there were parcels of every size and description piled around her plate and, at the very top, a letter from her father. She caught it up eagerly; anxious to read it before opening the presents.

"Dear Little Daughter,

"I am sorry I cannot be with you on your birthday and give you fifteen kisses, with ever so many to grow on, but we are not able always to do as we would wish, so, with all the love possible, I am enclosing a check so that you may buy a guitar for yourself and be able to play and sing for me when I come home."

Carita stopped. "Isn't that exactly like Daddy? He knows how much I have always wanted a guitar. Now Felipe and I can play together." She took up the letter again, holding it a moment to her lips: "Yes, Daddy dear, I will sing to you all day long, if you wish":

"I am reminded of a little verse I once heard which seems to me to exactly fit the occasion,

'Sure Old Father Time
Was glad the morning,
Of the day that you was born in.
And the world is glad this minute,
That you still are livin' in it.'

"It is hard to realize you are growing up— Fifteen years! for, no matter how old you are you will always be 'Little Carita' to your loving,

"FATHER."

She brushed away a tear; he was very dear to her: this father who had to be so far away. As a little girl her constant lament had been, "Why can't Daddy stay wiv us all de time?"

But Carita was never depressed for long and the sunshine came back as she began cutting strings and undoing the bright ribbons; it seemed to her there was everything for which she had ever expressed a wish, and a great many things besides. Her eyes were bright as she clasped a strand of corals round

her neck, and she almost screamed over the gay kimono; there was a full set of monogrammed ivory for her dresser, her Aunt Emily had sent that from Boston, and, away at the bottom of everything else, was a jeweler's box marked, "To Carita, from her mother, on her fifteenth birthday." She looked curiously at it. "Whatever can it be? Too big for a ring and not the right shape for a watch! Mother, dear, I simply cannot imagine."

When she finally opened it, her eyes grew big with surprise: "A bracelet! and such a beauty!" She slipped it on her arm, turning it round and round in increasing delight. "Tell me, mother, where did you ever find it? I am quite sure I never saw anything so beautiful."

"It is something I have had for years and I felt you would prize it because of its history as well as its beauty."

It was such a thing as might have been picked up in one of the famous pawn shops of the capital—a flat, dull band of gold, heavily chased, in which was set an opal of unusual size and coloring.

For a few moments Carita was silent, watching, as if fascinated, the strange changing green, blue and red light, then, very slowly, as if thinking deeply, said: “Tell me the story, mother, please. I feel almost as if the stone had life in it.”

“Yes, little daughter, I will tell you all about it—put away the presents and come into the other room with me. I want you to see your Uncle Robert’s picture.”

“Uncle Robert’s picture!” echoed Carita, incredulously, gathering her treasures together. “Why, I didn’t know I had an Uncle Robert. Where does he live and why haven’t I heard of him before?”

“That is what I am about to tell you. He

was a great deal older than I and it all happened when I was a very little girl. You see, he was an impractical kind of a fellow—‘full of music,’ mother used to say, and father never had any patience with him. He was so disappointed at not being able to make a business man of him.” She paused a moment. “Well, one day the rupture came. I can just remember it, although I couldn’t have been more than four years old at the time. Father was dreadfully angry over something he called ‘nothing but foolishness,’ and Robert went out of the house and said he would never return.”

“And didn’t he?” queried the eager listener. “Tell me, didn’t you ever see him again?”

“Only once, and that was years after. The rest of the family were at church, and I was reading under the big tree in the corner of the yard when a buggy stopped at the

gate and a strange man, with side whiskers, got out and asked if he could not come into the house and look around."

"Weren't you dreadfully afraid?"

"No, there was something about him that made me feel perfectly safe, and then Toby, our big Newfoundland, never left my side all the time he was there."

A little shudder passed over Carita at thought of the strange man as she questioned, breathlessly, "What did he do?"

"Nothing at all except look at the portraits in the hall—first at father's and then at mother's. I remember his voice was husky when he thanked me."

"Was that all?"

"All, except that when he left he clasped this bracelet on my arm saying, 'This is for you. Tell your father and mother that your brother Robert has been here and is going back to Mexico, that he is married and his

wife has a bracelet similar to this.' Then he called my attention to the lights in the opal, adding, 'I found it myself, little sister, in Queretaro, and I want you to think of your brother whenever you look at it.' I shall never forget mother's face when I told her of his visit."

"Didn't you ever hear from him again?"

"Not directly, although some one told father years after, that he heard he had died in Mexico and left a wife and little child. When we decided to come here I was hopeful that we might get some clew to their whereabouts, but, so far, we have not been successful." Turning to the table drawer, she took out an old-fashioned photograph. "This is he; you see the face is that of a dreamer, weak but sensitive. I have often thought, Carita, that you are much like him in your love of music."

Carita gave a long sigh. "*Mi madre,*

don't you know how I have longed to have a brother or sister or cousin, and now," she spoke slowly, "it seems almost as if it might come true. I am going to watch every place I go for the other bracelet, and I am just as sure I shall find it sometime. Oh, Mummy, Mummy, think what it would mean to have a really, truly relative of one's own!"

A sharp knock at the door made them both start. Carita hastily slipped her treasure up her sleeve, and, a moment later, a tall young fellow entered the room with an armful of American Beauty roses. "For your birthday, my lady."

She buried her face in the fragrant flowers. "Oh, Felipe, Felipe, *gracias!* You never forget, do you?"

"Indeed not, and let's see, how old is it? Fifteen! I'm only two years older myself, although I feel a great deal older. I suppose because I am a boy."

Carita laughed. She felt herself very much grown up on this particular birthday. "These flowers are absolutely perfect—the very thing for my party. Tell me, have you been to the flower market already?"

"Yes, and it was a perfect sight, with all kinds of set pieces, besides tube roses and lilies, and ever so many that I didn't know the name of. I wish I could have carried more. I'd have managed it some way, if I'd known there was a party on the tapis. And, Carita, I almost brought you a parrot."

She laughed joyously. "To keep me company, I suppose, but father has sent me money to buy a guitar, so I won't be lonesome ever again. As for my party, it's only a luncheon for six. Carmen, Dolores, Lucretia and her two cousins from New York. If *you* only were a girl, you could come too."

"It's my misfortune that I can't disguise as a princess and slip in with the rest, but

perhaps my services will come in later—showing the sights to people from the States is always interesting. Wonder how they'd like to see a bull fight! But I must be pegging along; there's plenty of time for me when there isn't a party on hand. *Adios*, and happy returns."

He was gone and Carita was soon busy arranging the roses in a tall vase for the center of the table. She was singing and musing to herself. How many friends she had, to be sure, and what a happy girl she ought to be!

She stopped to look at the bracelet on her arm. "Suppose she did have a really, truly cousin somewhere in the world." Of this she was convinced—she must never, never stop looking for the mate to her bracelet.

CHAPTER III

A GROUP OF GIRLS

“**W**HAT a perfectly lovely old place!”

“And what enormously thick walls!”

“Did you ever see such a fascinating knocker?”

The five girls who had been invited to the birthday celebration were laughing and talking together as they climbed the old staircase and, when Carita herself opened the door, there was a chorus of mingled “*Buenos Días*” and “Happy Returns of the Day.” Alice exclaiming, “And here is the fairy princess herself in this enchanted palace!”

“Monastery, you mean,” was the laughing

rejoinder; "and this isn't half as queer as many places I could show you. It only dates back about three hundred years. Besides, I want you to understand that there's a church in another part of the monastery. Yes," she nodded, "a real, true, Presbyterian church! Think of it! under the same roof with us," and she laughed gayly at the impression she had evidently made.

"Well," asserted Katharine positively, "if I lived in Mexico, I should choose just such a place. It's all too interesting for words."

"Come, Carita," interrupted Dolores, "show us your birthday gifts. I can scarcely wait to see them." Then, catching sight of the ivory set on the dresser, "How perfectly beautiful! but what is the 'M' in the monogram for?"

Carita made a wry face. "Didn't you know my name is just plain American 'Margaret'? Aunt Emily never will recognize

anything as heathenish and absurd as 'Carita.' And my letters from her are addressed so properly, 'Miss Margaret Andrews,' that I scarcely recognize my own foolish self. But she was a dear to send me such a wonderful present and I'm going to try my hardest to live up to the dignified 'M,' and, Dolores, what do you think? Daddy wants me to buy the very best guitar I can possibly find and be able to play and sing for him the next time he comes home."

As she paused out of breath, Lucetta put in, "What else? You haven't told us all, I know."

Carita laughed, proceeding to count off the remaining gifts on her fingers, hesitating a little before she mentioned the last and most precious—the bracelet; at the same time slipping it off and handing it to the girls to examine.

"What a glorious opal!" cried Alice. "I

am wild over opals! Do you suppose I could find one like it for a scarf pin?"

"I don't know," Carita answered doubtfully; "it would be hard to find one so brilliant."

"And the chased band! and raised clasp, with the monogram! There must be a story about it," interposed Dolores; "there's a story about everything in Mexico, you know."

Carita flushed painfully, answering slowly, "Ye-s, there is a story connected with it," then, with visible relief, as her mother entered the room, "but here's mother and luncheon is ready. Be prepared, girls, it's a real Mexican luncheon."

Taking their places at the table, so daintily arranged for the six girls, Alice exclaimed over the exquisite drawn-work tablecloth, while her sister, snatching up her place card, cried, "Tell me, did you paint these birds?"

"Look a little closer," interposed Carmen,

"and you will find they are not painted at all, but are made of feathers. Haven't you ever heard of the Indian feather work?"

As the girls more closely scrutinized one and another of the cards, they found it hard to decide which was the most beautiful, although Carmen declared in favor of the peacock, and Katharine preferred the Mexican eagle, while Alice made a mental note to take some home for her trousseau luncheon.

In the center of the table was the huge bunch of roses, and, somewhat triumphantly, Dolores cried: "There, girls, you couldn't find such flowers in New York outside of a conservatory, and, even then, they would cost a fortune! How much were they, Carita?"

"I don't quite know; a few centavos apiece, in your money, I am sure," she replied; "Felipe bought them at the flower market."

"They're simply gorgeous!" asserted

Alice, bending over them, "and I presume Felipe is the Prince of this enchanted place."

Carita laughed. "Oh, no, Felipe is only Felipe, that's all. He's exactly two years older than I, and he never forgets my birthday. His mother was an old friend of mother's, and when I was one year old she brought him to see me, with a red rose in his tiny fist. I told him this morning if he were only a girl he could come to my party,—but he's offered to help in the sightseeing."

"Good!" acquiesced Lucetta, clapping her hands, "there are no end of things to see and places to go. Nobody can help like Felipe."

"I've been wondering," interrupted Katharine, doubtfully surveying the strange fruit which had been placed before her a few moments before, "what under the sun this is and how we are supposed to eat it."

Carmen and Lucetta burst into peals of

laughter, as Carita replied, selecting a peculiarly shaped fork from the silver at her place, "I forgot you might need instructions. The fruit is a mango, you stick the long prong of the fork into the end of the stone, like this, and then—why, then you eat it the best you can. That's all," and she laughed at the unsuccessful attempts made by the two novices; "if at first, you don't succeed, try, try again"; adding consolingly, as they looked slightly disconcerted, "It's honestly worth while."

After some further experimenting they both agreed with her and enjoyed the fruit immensely, although Alice insisted it tasted a wee bit like turpentine.

The luncheon was a great success and, while the girls seemed at first suspicious of the Mexican dishes, they ended by liking them, from the chillis to the salad. Mrs. Andrews had added, on her own account,

hot baking-powder biscuits, and when these were brought in Alice remarked, with some relief in her tone, "We're on safe ground now. I never tasted better at home."

The birthday cake was a masterpiece, with its pink candles, and bow knots. "I've got the ring!" exclaimed Lucetta, holding it up triumphantly.

"And I, the money!" shouted Alice, as she pulled out a Mexican coin.

"I suppose I shall have to sit in the corner and spin," said Carita resignedly, with a thimble on the end of her finger, while Dolores, with evident pleasure, pinned a four-leaved clover on her dainty blouse.

As Mrs. Andrews watched the fun, she could not but feel they were an unusually interesting group of girls. Alice, somewhat older than the others, was tall and slender, with light hair and blue eyes: she was to be

married in the fall, and so was much interested in picking up pretty things for the charming home she and Tom had planned. Katharine, her sister, a studious girl of eighteen, took the trip most seriously, eager to learn all she could of the strange country. Alice had laughed when she had discovered her in the library a few weeks before, deep in Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico."

Carmen was like a butterfly, full of native grace and charm. Though her father was a loyal American, he had married a Mexican Señorita, and Carmen was a true child of the sunny, romantic land. In striking contrast was Dolores, who was practical and sober to a fault, and Lucetta, a frail, delicate girl of sixteen.

The mother's eyes wandered lovingly to her own daughter, the idol of her heart. Carita was just herself—gay, vivacious, pleasure loving. Selfish, yes, and yet gen-

erosity itself when occasion presented. She was as full of changing light as a prism or the opal in her bracelet, and yet there was a trace of the Puritan which sometimes asserted itself and surprised those who knew nothing of her real nature.

“And, now, mother,” cried Carita, breaking in upon her revery, “the girls want to see the kitchen. I can’t make them understand a *brassero* is a Mexican stove and that the cooking is done with charcoal.” As she spoke she was pushing back her chair and leading the way to a dark room that answered for a kitchen, where Francisca and Clemencia ruled supreme. Stretched along one side of the room was a kind of solid table built of brick in which, at intervals, were depressions where the remains of charcoal fires still smoldered. Clemencia showed all her white teeth as the Señorita pointed out her earthenware pots and pans in which

the vegetables were cooked and laughed with pleasure when the girls praised her biscuits and wondered how ever in the world she could have baked them in the funny contrivance that served as an oven. She was very grateful to the Señora for having taught her the art of biscuit making.

Katharine declared she hadn't begun to see all she wanted to, when Carita hurried them into the *patio* for the promised game of "blind man's buff."

"Of course," she apologized, "this is only a pocket handkerchief of a *patio*, not big and grand as most of them are, but we love it anyhow. I made the hanging baskets all myself, and Dicky bird is as happy as can be all day long."

And, as if to demonstrate the truth of her words, the pet canary proceeded to sing as if its throat would break with joy.

"A *patio* is lovely, of course, in pleasant

weather," mused Katharine, thoughtfully, "but I don't believe I would like it when it rains."

"And how about it when it snows?" shivered Alice.

"Snows!" interrupted Dolores, amazed at the idea, "why, it never snows in Mexico City. The only snow we see is on the head of Popo—only *once* a few flakes came fluttering down, and my! how excited we were, to be sure, but, Carita, hadn't we better tell the girls what a *piñate* is, so they will know what to expect. They haven't the least idea, and it seems like taking an unfair advantage."

"Perhaps so," was the answer, "only I thought it would be such fun to surprise them," and she pointed above them to a kind of earthen jar, made to represent a grotesque figure, which hung suspended on a cross beam.

"That, my dear friends, is a *piñate*" (pronounced pin-yah-tay).

Lucetta and Carmen laughed. "Honestly, Carita, it is a particularly ugly one—where did you ever find it?"

"In a funny little shop down by the Zocalo after mother and I searched all one afternoon. You see, it's out of season—a week or two ago and there would have been plenty about. Now," she continued, striking an attitude and holding out a handkerchief, "I want you to understand that this extremely ugly figure takes the place of a Christmas tree in this 'heathenish country,' as Aunt Emily would say. Each one of you must take your turn at being blind-folded and try and break the jar with this stick. I positively refuse to tell what may happen then, but it's more fun than a Jack Horner's pie, of that I assure you."

While she spoke, she was tying her hand-



“ TYING HER HANDKERCHIEF ROUND ALICE’S EYES ”

kerchief round Alice's eyes, and at the same time arming her with a long pole. "You have three chances, so do your best to hit the jar."

In spite of her efforts, the figure continued to hang unharmed, and Carmen and Lucretia succeeded her, but with no better luck.

"Now, Katharine, strike hard," admonished Carita, and much to their delight, after one sure stroke, the jar fell crashing to the ground, its contents scattering far and wide. Candies and favors of all kinds rolled wildly in every direction, and the girls, with shrieks of laughter, scrambled for the prizes.

"Do see this perfectly funny little thing!" cried Alice, opening a small box and exclaiming over a miniature object which Carmen explained was a dressed flea.

"A dressed flea!" repeated the others, crowding about. "Who ever heard of a dressed flea?"

"The natives take no end of pains doing it," went on Dolores. "It will be a rare treasure for your house, my dear," and Alice carefully put the box away in her pocket, convinced that "her Tom" could never, in the world, guess what she was bringing him.

"I have a skeleton," laughed Katharine, while Lucetta and Carmen added to the excitement by shaking rattles made of gourds and blowing the oddest kind of whistles.

How it happened no one knew, but in the midst of the confusion and merry making, Carita tripped and fell headlong on the stone floor of the *patio*.

"Oh, what is the matter?"

"Are you hurt? Are you hurt?" asked the excited girls anxiously, as one tried to help her up. Carmen called Mrs. Andrews, Dolores ran to the telephone for the doctor, while Lucetta hastened for a glass of water.

"One of the bones in the ankle is broken," declared the doctor, arriving after what seemed an interminable time, "I am sorry to say. It will be at least a month before you can safely bear your weight on the foot."

"A month!" repeated the girls dismayed, and Carita moaned faintly, "And I so wanted to show the girls the sights!"

"It can't be helped. It is a case where it will be necessary to make haste slowly," responded the doctor gravely.

It was a sad ending for the merry party, but, as Dolores said, "It might have been worse, and we'll come in every single afternoon and tell you exactly where we've been and what we've seen, and you can help plan for the next day, so it will seem almost as if you were with us."

They had all gone, leaving Carita forlornly stretched on the couch, still pale from the accident, and rebellious at her fate.

Suddenly she glanced at her arm—was the precious bracelet safe? She turned the band around and her heart stood still. What was the matter? Was it broken? Could she have injured it when she fell?

A closer scrutiny revealed that the plate on the clasp was open, there must have been a hidden spring, and still more strange, beneath the plate was an indistinct miniature of a child.

“Mother,” she cried, “come and see!—tell me, did you know the picture was in the bracelet?”

Thinking her delirious from pain and excitement, Mrs. Andrews hastened to her side. As Carita held out the bracelet and she saw the faded outlines, she was silent a moment, and then answered in a strangely quiet tone: “No, my dear, I did not know—this must be the child of whom your Uncle Robert spoke.”

CHAPTER IV

A NEW IDEA—PATRIOTISM

THE girls were as good as their word, and not a day passed without bringing visits from one or another: sometimes they all trooped there together, making the old walls ring with the account of their day's adventures; again Alice would drop in for a word of advice from Mrs. Andrews in regard to some purchase or to ask where she could go to arrange about the drawn-work lunch cloth she had so set her heart upon. One day she had found a Spanish lace collar, and, again, a beautiful embroidered shawl. At Carita's suggestion, she had learned the way to the pawn shops and the quaint old Thieves' Market where, among

the piles of trash she found, from time to time, articles of real interest and value. A pair of brass candlesticks to adorn the mantel of the pretty apartment she and Tom had dreamed of; an old sugar bowl with the Maximilian coat of arms; a ring of quaint Spanish design, being among the treasures she displayed.

“You see,” she used to say, “any one can have cut glass from Tiffany’s, but things like these one never sees outside of collections. Tom will be wild over this ring, there’s no knowing to whom it may have belonged.”

There were mornings spent in the brilliant foreign shops that make Mexico City the rival of Paris; there were excursions to musty old churches and to the great Cathedral where Señoras, with wonderful mantillas, knelt beside peons wrapped in their dirty blankets. The markets, too, were a never-failing source of interest with the In-

dians squatting on the ground, their little stocks spread before them. Then Katharine spent more than one forenoon in the National Museum where she found relics exactly like those she had read about, and made up her mind she should certainly write a theme on the old Aztec calendar stone. There were hours in the Alameda garden, with its velvety green lawns and semi-tropical trees, where the splendid Police band played the National airs: there were numerous drives in and around the capital, and Alice voiced the sentiment of the rest when she declared that the most interesting of all was the drive up the Paseo to Chapultepec: "I don't wonder President Diaz loves the castle and the park, with those old cypresses covered with gray moss. It's altogether too picturesque for words!"

So the days passed, and "the prisoner of the *patio*," as the girls called Carita, found

the hours all the more tedious because of the delightful time the others were enjoying. Had it not been for her guitar and Felipe, she would have been indeed, unhappy. Fortunately, her music proved a never-failing consolation. Felipe, who played himself, volunteered to find an instrument for her and succeeded in picking up a real treasure in a dingy pawn shop down by the Zocalo, for a guitar like a violin improves with age.

Then, too, he had offered his services in teaching her to play, and many were the lessons given in and between the sightseeing excursions.

"It is this way and that way," he would say, boyishly guiding her fingers over the frets, and would usually end by taking up his own instrument and singing, in his fresh young voice, "Oh, Mi Adorado!" or "Toreador."

After a little, Carita was able to play a few simple accompaniments and join him with her sweet untrained soprano.

It was quite six weeks before she was able to walk without crutches, and a red-letter day when her mother consented to her going over the stairs and out to the monastery garden.

“I’ll be very careful, mother dear, truly I will, but the doctor said it would be all right, and I do so long to get out under the trees. I’ll take my guitar with me and you needn’t worry one mite.”

Very carefully she made her way down the stairs, through the great entrance door, and then, by a small path, round the side of the monastery.

It took all her young strength to open the gate and, after pushing her way in, she stopped with an exclamation of pleasure. “How thick the ivy is and how many blos-

soms there are on the oleander Daddy planted for me scarcely a year ago!"

In the crotch of one of the trees was a nest with three speckled eggs; the old portero had hung a cage with a green parrot near the gate, while a mockingbird fluttered among the branches of the crape-myrtle.

It was such a garden as would be hard to find outside of old Mexico; not one of those trim places with straight even paths and carefully pruned trees, but a wild riot of everything unusual and beautiful, and surrounded on all sides by an adobe wall at least twelve feet high. Over the wall, in front of the rustic seat where Carita had settled herself, trailed a splash of color that an artist would have found it difficult to reproduce—that was bougainvillea, while a heliotrope tree to her right perfumed the air with fragrance.

Over her head, circling through the air,

alighting on the wall or venturing on the ground, with their low love notes, were countless pigeons.

Dreamily content and thinking how the monks, so long ago, must have loved this place, Carita picked up her guitar, lightly touching one chord and then another. "Hark! what was that?" She started at the slight sound—a ball bounced from the wall and fell at her feet. Surmising Felipe might be playing tennis in the nearby court, quick as a flash she caught it up and, having thrown it in the direction from which it had come, bent once more over her guitar and struck the opening strains of "La Paloma." Again a ball bounded over the wall and this time rolled some distance away. Laying aside her instrument, she went in search of it, murmuring to herself, "I wonder if he suspects who is on this side of the wall," she sent it after the other.

A third time it happened, and this time the ball disappeared in a thick tangle of vines. As Carita vigorously pushed aside the leaves with her crutch, which she had near in case of emergency, a head appeared above the wall, and a moment later no other than Felipe, in white tennis flannels, with a racquet in one hand and balls bulging from his pockets, jumped into the garden with a "Hello, there!" of genuine surprise. "It's mighty jolly to see you here again. I was wondering who was my unknown friend—fact is, the tennis balls seem so bewitched this afternoon we've decided to give up our game."

As she seated herself once more on the rustic bench, he threw himself at her feet. "Now, Carita, imagine I'm Daddy and sing for me."

In answer, she tossed back her hair and, placing the guitar in his hands, responded,

“Play ‘La Paloma’ for me, Felipe, there’s a dear, I can’t get it right. No matter how hard I try, I make mistakes.”

With easy grace he struck the chords and sang it through, while the girl beside him listened with flushed face and parted lips.

“If I only could do as well as you! I can’t help feeling a bit discouraged over my music. It isn’t going to be as easy as I thought to fulfill my promise to Daddy when he comes in June.”

He turned quickly. “It isn’t like you to be discouraged. Besides, honest Injun! you’re doing wonderfully well. Now, you play while I keep time and we’ll sing together.”

He watched her slender fingers; this time she played it through without a mistake, and at the last note he clapped his hands. “*Bueno!* Couldn’t have done it better myself.”

She laughed. "I always do well when you are with me. It is only when I am alone I feel discouraged."

For half an hour longer they played and sang together, one air after another, and then, as if tired, she laid down the guitar and they sat quietly watching the white clouds chasing each other over the blue Mexican sky, while the pigeons circled nearer, even lighting on her shoulder.

It was Carita who broke the silence. "Do you know, I don't believe any place in the world could be lovelier than this garden. The girls talk about the States and New York, but," she was very emphatic now, "I am quite sure I never could like them as I do Mexico"; she paused, waiting for Felipe to reply, then went on: "Why don't you answer? Surely you love it here."

Tossing one ball after another into the air and catching them on his racquet, "Yes," he

answered slowly, "and yet I can't feel as you do. It isn't our own country, and we don't really belong here. I'm going to Harvard in the fall, and, I must say, I'm mighty glad of it. I'm looking forward to the big ball games and the boat crews and fraternities and all that sort of thing. There's nothing here for a fellow!"

"Of course, college is all right, but after you've got all the education you need, and all the fun, too, you'll be glad enough to come back to dear old Mexico, won't you, now?"

Again he was silent and not until she pressed him, did he answer.

"Well, no, fact is I don't believe I ever shall come back"—he spoke slowly—"although father wants me to, but, don't you see, Carita, we're foreigners here," he made a gesture, "'gringos,' as the peons say, and, some way, I can't help the feeling that a fel-

low ought to give his best to his own country."

She looked at him in amazement. "How strangely you talk! Give one's best to one's country!" She was a little resentful with it all. "How perfectly foolish! Surely one has the right to live exactly where one pleases. I intend to have a good time in my life, and I don't see why I shouldn't come back to Mexico. You can't think I ought to stay in the States. Everything is brand new and shiny there and," she shuddered, "it's cold in the winter, besides—besides, lots of other things I shouldn't like."

He could but laugh at her dismay. "Of course, you have a perfect right to do as you wish, but you see, I am a man and I can't help the feeling I have a duty to my country."

She looked at him in amazement, was this Felipe whom she had known all her life, who

had brought her roses on her first birthday and every birthday since?

He did not argue the matter and the conversation drifted into other channels, but long after Felipe had leaped over the wall and left her alone again her mind was busy with the strange new thought.

Of course one had a duty to one's parents, she could understand that, but to one's country. How absurd! She shrugged her shoulders, and yet, was that what was meant by patriotism? Of course, Felipe was a boy and looked at things differently from the way she did. Of this she was certain, *she* had no duty, she thought, with a flash of defiance, to the United States. She would go to school there as her father and mother wished and then she would come back to Mexico and do exactly as she wished. Her eyes wandered lovingly to the bougainvillea and the cooing pigeons. Picking up her gui-

tar, she played the Spanish Fandango: she had settled everything in her own mind and yet the thought persisted, "Could there possibly ever come a time when she, too, might feel a duty to that strange country beyond the Rio Grande?"

CHAPTER V

THE BULL FIGHT

“**A**ND the best of it is,” exclaimed Carmen, “you can go with us from now on and we’ve saved the *mas importantes* until the last!”

They were in the sala together and Carita laughingly responded, “And what do you mean by the ‘*mas importantes*’?”

Carmen proceeded to count off, “There’s the Feast of Poppies on the Viga, that will be a perfectly ‘grande’ excursion, and a day at Guadalupe, the girls must go there. Besides”—she twirled her fan a little nervously, —“they ought not to miss a bull fight!”

“A bull fight!” Carita’s tone expressed dismay. “The Viga and the day at Guada-

lupe are all right, but Daddy never would hear to my going to a bull fight. Still," she continued reflectively, "I'm older now."

"That's one thing I told Tom I would surely do," asserted Alice, highly delighted at the suggestion. "I think it would be perfectly glorious!"

"Mexico wouldn't be Mexico without bull fights," persisted Carmen, looking appealingly at Mrs Andrews, "and Mama would chaperone."

"I suppose there is no real objection," was the somewhat doubtful answer. "As you say, bull fighting is the national sport, although, to my mind, it is brutality itself. I cannot but feel sorry you proposed it."

"Still," urged Dolores, "the girls are visiting and want to see all they can. It might be a good chance—"

"Mama says," Carmen persisted, "from what she hears of football in the States, she

doesn't think it can be worse. It's perfectly thrilling with the ring just packed and the bright dresses—to say nothing of the music."

"It would be such fun to write about it to Tom," put in Alice. "What do you say, Felipe?"

"It's something to see, all right," he responded, "and I don't suppose you need stay through it all."

So it was decided, Mrs. Andrews somewhat reluctantly giving her consent.

The girls agreed it would be a great lark, Lucetta alone refusing to be persuaded.

"You can do as you like," she said, "but I should be in terror every moment."

It is hard for a foreigner to understand the place the bull fight holds in Spanish countries: it can be likened to nothing except, possibly, to the combats of Roman days when men and beasts fought in the amphitheater.

An old Spanish writer declared, "Spanish men are as much braver than other men as the Spanish bull is more savage and valiant than other bulls."

Sunday is the accepted day, and long before the appointed time people in automobiles, cabs and on foot, may be seen hastening in the direction of the Plaza de Toros, as the great circular structure of stone and wood is called, while the street cars marked "Toros" are literally jammed with excited people.

Carmen's mother, though deferring in many ways to her husband's opinions and yielding to his wish that their daughter should choose her friends among Americans, was at heart enough of a Mexican to be secretly delighted at being asked to chaperone and promised to call for the party in her new limousine.

She could not restrain a glance of admi-

ration at the girls from the States in their trim tailored skirts, dainty blouses and white shoes, for there is something that distinguishes the "Americano" from the women of any other country; then, with easy grace, she leaned from the car to assure Carita's mother that she need not feel the slightest anxiety. "It will be a great experience; every one should see a bull fight."

As the car disappeared round the curve Mrs. Andrews sighed, "Why had she allowed Carita to go? Would her husband approve? And with vague misgivings she went back to her sewing.

Felipe was waiting near the entrance and, without delay, our party passed into the amphitheater. As Carmen had said, it was a wonderful sight: the seats rising in tiers from the arena nearly filled with an enthusiastic crowd of anxious spectators who were already cheering and shouting themselves

hoarse. The bands were playing and the whole scene most exciting.

Alice whispered under her breath to Carita, "I do wish Tom were here!" and even Dolores felt a thrill.

After a few preliminaries, there was a blast of trumpets, and, resplendent in silks and velvets, gold lace and jewels, the gay company of bull fighters entered and marched across the arena.

Again a flourish to trumpets announced the beginning of the first act, and, mid tremendous applause, a bull rushed into the ring from a dark stall.

Bewildered by the crowds, the music and the bright light, the unhappy animal pawed the earth, and bellowed at the capeadores who confronted him with their red capes. Meanwhile, a barbed steel hook with flowing ribbons, indicating the *hacienda* from which he came, was inserted in his shoulder. En-

raged by the stinging of the hook, he was still further enraged and dashed frantically at one of the picadors who sat motionless on his blind-folded horse. With a toss of his horns, he overthrew both horse and rider. In another moment they would be gored to death.

Suddenly, realizing the horror of what was to follow, Carita, her nerves tense with excitement, gave a glance at Carmen and her mother. Surely there was nothing to enjoy in seeing an innocent horse killed by a mad bull.

They did not even notice her, so utterly absorbed were they in watching the ring: Carmen, leaning forward with parted lips, while her mother was actually waving her handkerchief and shouting "*Bueno*" with the rest.

"What can we do? We must not stay!" and then a sudden determination flashed

through Carita's mind. Alice was deadly pale, another moment and she might faint. Katharine sat rigid in her terror, while Dolores had covered her eyes with her hands. Carita caught Felipe's attention. Ah! he understood and motioned to the gate. She rose resolutely, gathering up her parasol and fan. Three horses had been killed, the first act was over, and the audience cheering madly. Now was the time, if ever, to make their escape.

"Girls," she whispered in short disconnected sentences, "this is no place for us! we must go. Mother was right, we should never have come! it's wicked, it's brutal! and the next act will be even worse! Quick, there's the trumpet again!"

Without a word, the four girls followed Felipe, as he led the way through the mad people to the nearest exit. Only once Carita looked back. Carmen was still gazing at

the arena, her eyes bright with excitement, and her mother was evidently complacently discussing the fact that four bulls were to be sacrificed as a feature of the next act.

A revulsion of feeling swept over Carita; Carmen and her mother must be made of different stuff. At that moment she longed more for her mother and father than she had ever done before.

"Oh, Daddy!" she murmured under her breath, "you didn't want me to come. Whatever made me do it?"

Once fairly outside, they all felt better. There was plenty of room in the street cars; in fact they were the only occupants. Felipe was very quiet—he should not have permitted them to go. He liked clean, manly sport as well as any one, but this killing of innocent animals! "Ugh!" he vowed he would never again be induced to witness a bull fight.

Carmen and her mother drove over that evening. They were "Mortified they had been so remiss; they would have left with the girls, but did not realize until too late, but it was really too bad they did not stay. It was '*bueno! bueno!*' truly a great occasion. Four bulls killed, and so brave a matador."

She noticed the look of horror that passed over Carita's face. "Ah! a moment's faintness! but it soon passes. *Quien sabe?*" and she shrugged her shoulders.

After they had gone, Carita turned to her mother. "*Mi madre*, there are some things I don't like about Mexico, and I am glad the picnic on the Viga won't be so exciting." Then, very softly, as she touched her mother's hair with her lips, "And, Mother, I think you and Daddy know best about," she paused, "almost everything. Some way I can't help thinking Mexicans are different from Americans, and the girls say the football games

in the States are not anything like a bull fight." She shivered at the recollection of the horses and the fierce bulls.

"My dear," said her mother, as she kissed her little daughter's sensitive lips, "by the time you are a little older you will understand why I think there is no place like the United States."

CHAPTER VI

THE JOLLY PICNIC

“**I**’VE been wondering,” began Katharine, as she and Dolores sat together one morning busily embroidering the collars of the middies they were planning to wear to the picnic. “I’ve been wondering what the Viga is—a picnic there sounds so altogether delightful.”

“Do you mean to say you have been in Mexico nearly four months and haven’t yet been told that the Viga is the historic old waterway by which Cortez is supposed to have entered the city? At present it is chiefly famous because of the market gardens along its sides.”

Dolores stopped to take an extra stitch,

then went on, "As for the Feast of Poppies, that's a flower festival that takes place in honor of an old Aztec god. It's one of the sights of Mexico to watch the flower-laden boats passing up and down the canal."

"I should say it was," interrupted Carita, who was just then ushered into the room, "and the floating gardens! they're too fascinating for words, not that they really float now, only kind of wobble, you know, but they say the natives made them of branches and earth and that they really used to float about at the convenience of the people, a rather nice arrangement, it seems to me, but—to change to a more important subject—Dolores dear, do you suppose your mother would make us some lemon tarts? My mouth waters every time I think of them, and they would be so nice for our picnic lunch."

"Of course she will, and anything else you

suggest. Carmen has promised the *dulces*."

"Fine! I'll make some peanut butter sandwiches, and furnish the olives. We must be sure to have plenty because there will be ten of us."

"Ten!" repeated Dolores. "I can count but eight. Your mother, Felipe, and we six girls."

"Oh, but—" and Carita nodded her head mysteriously.

"But what? you can't mean—

"Oh, but I do. It's true as true can be. Carlos and Henrique are both in town and will be delighted to go with us. Isn't it lucky?"

"*Bueno!*" and Carita went on to explain for Katharine's benefit that Henrique and Carlos were two American boys who lived in Chihuahua at the mines, and occasionally came to the city. "And," she continued impressively, "I want you to understand Hen-

rique graduated from the school of mines at Cornell, last summer, and Carlos goes to Harvard with Felipe in the fall. But I must be off, I only stopped in to see if the lunch was all right and to tell you about the boys—*Adios!*”

It was a gay company that assembled at the Zocalo next morning en route to the Viga, as might have been guessed from the mysterious bulging parcels the boys were allowed to carry. The girls were in fresh middies, with bright sweaters on their arms, the boys in white suits and straw sailor hats.

Henrique and Carlos were straight limbed young fellows, both of them slightly heavier than Felipe; Carlos had black hair and eyes, while Henrique was fair, with a mop of curly hair which would make itself evident, no matter how closely it was cut. Laughing and chatting easily over the countless nothings that so interest young people, they

boarded the old-fashioned mule cars that were to take them to the head of the canal where they found people already gathering in cabs and automobiles.

The canal was thick with flat boats, large and small, poled along by dusky natives—some piled high with fruits and vegetables, but the greater number were filled to overflowing with flowers of all kinds. It could easily be understood why this was the Feast of Poppies for, as Alice excitedly exclaimed, grabbing Carita's arm, "I never saw so many poppies in all my life!"

There were Indian girls with wreaths of the brightly colored flowers on their heads, and garlands thrown about their necks, singing, playing and dancing with a grace all their own, as their boats threaded their way in and out among the other craft.

Katharine gave a cry of pleasure, and Mrs. Andrews exclaimed, "This is a typical

Mexican scene, with a suggestion of Venice! A slight stretch of the imagination and you can imagine these mud scows are gondolas, and the fellows poling them real true gondoliers. Hark!" and, as she spoke, the strains of a guitar floated over the water, adding the charm of native music to the picturesque scene.

It seemed an endless procession of non-descript craft: narrow row boats by the dozen; canoes hollowed out of the trunks of trees. Oftentimes a woman would be the sole occupant of a flower-laden scow, or a whole family would pass, joining in a happy chorus, from the cooing of a black-eyed baby to the light laughter of brothers and sisters.

Finally three flat boats, covered by a kind of rude awning, stopped close to our party, and one of the Indians, removing his big hat out of respect, signified to Felipe, in broken English, that the boats were at the disposal

of the Señor and, with much fun and laughter, the members of our party stepped on board and joined the strange procession on the canal.

"I do wish some of the boys and girls at home could see us now!" meditatively observed Katharine, lazily dabbling her hands in the transparent water as they left the crowd behind them and slowly made their way through beds of water lilies, while the dark-skinned natives of other boats threw whole handfuls of poppies and other flowers, until they were literally almost deluged.

After a little they began to skirt along the shores of Xochimolco, as the Indians call the floating islands, and could almost touch the poppies and lilies blooming on their shores.

Finally the boats were anchored and they went ashore for their luncheon. It was indeed a perfect place for a picnic; the canal



John Goss

“JOINED THE STRANGE PROCESSION ON THE CANAL”

on one side, with its willow-bordered banks, Popo and the White Lady in the distance, their outlines clear against the distant sky, while here and there could be seen the oddest of native huts made of bamboo and thatched with palm leaves. "Exactly as they must have looked," exclaimed Carita, calling the attention of the others, "when Cortez discovered it all so many hundreds of years ago!"

But they were hungry as wolves, and the boys hurried away to get branches and twigs for a fire, while the girls busied themselves spreading the white tablecloth on the ground and unpacking the boxes.

Carlos had disappeared the moment they landed, and the fire was already crackling when Carmen spied him coming through the distant trees.

It was quite evident he had a surprise for them, for he kept his hands behind his back,

and when Henrique pressed him as to where he had been he replied mysteriously, "Guess! It's my contribution to the picnic."

"Potatoes to cook in the ashes," suggested Alice, promptly remembering picnics of other times and other places.

"Wrong! Try again."

"Fresh water to drink," suggested Carmen, and when he had emphatically said, "No" to this, too, Carita cried gayly, "I know, it's a string of fish," and they gathered around him as he proudly displayed "his catch."

The fish were soon fried to a delicious brown, the coffee made, and the party, with the "hugest of appetites," to quote Felipe, "set to."

Sandwiches, Saratoga potatoes, lemon tarts, all disappeared in a most astonishing manner. Then lunch was cleared away and the boys and girls disposed themselves as

comfortably as they could to while away the hours of the afternoon.

Katharine and Felipe started off for a walk in the direction of the native homes, while Carmen and Carlos wandered along the shores of the canal until they were out of sight. The others, with Henrique, were quite content under one of the old trees, while Mrs. Andrews, a little removed from them, was soon deep in a favorite book.

After a while Alice began meditatively, "Carita, I begin to understand why you love Mexico. This old canal fairly has bewitched me."

Flushing with pleasure, as she always did when Mexico was praised, Carita was about to reply when Alice went on slowly, "Only I don't believe I could be satisfied here all the time. You've no idea what the life is in the States, especially in the winter. It's one round of opera and theater, besides clubs

and charities and social settlement work. After I'm married I suppose it will be still worse, because Tom wants me to keep up my music and everything else. It's very different, I assure you, from this land of mañana."

"That's true enough," put in Henrique, as he lazily stretched himself at the foot of the tree, "although Mexico's waking up and no mistake. It is the Americans, too, that are making her sit up and take notice. You won't know the land of mañana if it keeps up. No wonder Diaz favors the Americans. I'm glad I had my four years at Cornell, but, after all, Mexico is the land of possibilities."

Carita looked round triumphantly, Katharine and Felipe were just within earshot. She was glad to have Felipe know that every one did not share his opinions. Before he could express himself, Katharine turned the

conversation by asserting very positively, "My ambition is to go to college first and then take up some line of work that is really worth while."

Carita was amazed. "Go to college? I never thought of that, and what do you mean by something worth while?"

"Oh, I don't know," was the careless rejoinder; "there are so many things for girls to do nowadays it will be hard to decide."

Carita pondered over her answer. She had never thought of college, although she was easily head in the little class of a dozen girls held in a building adjoining the old monastery. When her mother spoke of education in the States, she had taken for granted it would be some school where she would perhaps study French and art and keep up her music. "College!" and yet, why shouldn't she go to college and do something worth while as other girls did?

She knitted her brows thoughtfully. Going to America to be educated might prove more interesting than she thought. Her face cleared suddenly. She would talk it all over with Daddy when he came home.

But the long afternoon was passing—it was almost time for supper, and after that was eaten they called the silent Indians to pole them up the canal. If the Viga had been beautiful in the morning, with all the local light and color, it was far more so in the moonlight, now that the crowds had dispersed, and the willows along the shores were casting strange shadows on the water. Instead of the strains of the guitar, the air rang with songs so dear to young American hearts, from “My Old Kentucky Home” and “Annie Laurie” to “Merrily We Roll Along” and “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.”

It was the first time Carita had been on

just that kind of a jolly picnic and she enjoyed it all immensely. Tired as she was, after they reached home she slipped on her kimono and went into her mother's room to talk it all over. Curling up in her mother's big chair, she reflected happily, "I don't believe there ever, in all the world, could be a nicer crowd than we had to-day." She laughed aloud. "And didn't we make the old Viga ring with those college songs? I'm going to learn every one of them on my guitar. Henrique said he would send me his book," and she began humming happily,

"The Owl and the Pussy Cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat;
They took some honey and plenty of money
Wrapped up in a five-pound note."

"Although, after all, I think I prefer the one about the miller's big dog. I laughed until I cried the way Carlos brought out 'B—I—N—G—O.'"

Mrs. Andrews smiled at the young girl's enthusiasm. She, too, had enjoyed the day, and quite agreed with Carita in her estimate of the young people, but she pointed warningly to the clock, "Not much time for beauty sleep unless you hurry to bed," and, with a laugh, and sigh because the day was over, Carita slipped away.

CHAPTER VII

AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE

ONCE upon a time, the story goes, as Juan, a poor Indian, was climbing the steep hill of Guadalupe on his way to mass, he was startled by the singing of the angels, and the Virgin Mary appeared in a vision, bidding him go to the bishop and ask that a shrine be built to her upon that spot.

The bishop refused to believe Juan's story unless he could bring some proof of the divine appearance and, much disappointed, the Indian returned to the hill. Again the Virgin came, this time bidding him fill his mantle, or *tilma*, with flowers which, even as she spoke, bloomed upon the barren hillside.

Hastening to the bishop and opening his *tilma*, what was Juan's surprise to find a picture of the Virgin upon the coarse cloth? Then, indeed, was the bishop convinced, and falling upon his knees, declared a chapel should at once be erected on the hill, and the sacred likeness enshrined there in a frame of gold.

Such is the legend of Guadalupe, the favorite place of pilgrimage for all pious Indians, the present church having been erected in 1835 at a cost of over two million dollars. It is a handsome structure, and, to its right, a chapel has been built over the spring which, according to tradition, gushed from the ground where the Virgin stood. Beginning at the church, a flight of steps leads to a shrine at the top of the hill and, on Guadalupe day, the steps are black with pious Indians making the ascent on hands and knees. Half way up, attention is arrested by two

picturesque stone sails, placed there by some sailors in honor to the Virgin who, they believe, saved them from shipwreck.

"But, *mi madre*," urged Carita, "I have scarcely worn my bracelet at all, and I do so want to because"—here her voice became pleading—"because I might happen on some one who has its mate and, besides, it's so pretty, I like to wear it. Please, *mi madre*."

Her mother hesitated, thinking it not the thing for a young girl to wear so valuable a piece of jewelry in public places, but Carita went on, "No one will see it, for I will keep it way up on my arm under my sleeve. No one will know I have it on."

So it happened Carita wore her bracelet the day they went to Guadalupe. There were two automobiles to take the ten of them, Henrique and Carlos being still in the city, having decided to stay over the Fourth: Felipe drove one car and Carmen's

mother sent her limousine with her careful chauffeur. It is not a pleasant ride to Guadalupe, through the slums of the city, but, once there, it is most interesting; the plaza lined with booths where everything imaginable is offered for sale, from tamales and pulque to postcards of the *tilma* and candles to burn before the sacred shrine, while a touch of the modern is added by the cheapest of cheap phonographs, and a pianola turning out tunes for a wheezing merry-go-round.

As they left the automobiles and started up the walk to the church, Alice shuddered at the dirty peon families encamped in the enclosure, and Carita looked to be sure her bracelet was well under her sleeve. She was almost sorry she had worn it, for there would be no chance in a place like this of meeting any long lost relative.

The church was unusually full, for besides some Indian worshipers there was a crowd

of tourists with friends from the city and accompanied by loud-voiced guides. At an altar in one corner mass was being said, while candles blazed on the great altar, and the air was heavy with incense.

They had spent some time looking at the queer relics, studying the frescoes portraying the history of Guadalupe, and admiring the gorgeous jeweled crown that hung over the rude painting on the *tilma*.

Then Mrs. Andrews, with Carmen, Dolores and Henrique, decided to go back to the city, leaving Carita to follow a little later with the others. Felipe and Katharine were in the chapel outside, while Carlos, Alice and Carita still lingered in the church.

Suddenly Carita started. Standing at one end of the silver chancel rail was a woman with a broad band of gold on her left arm. Could it be the other bracelet? quick as a flash the thought came to Carita's mind.

At any rate she must find out. The woman had already disappeared in the crowd. Without a word, Carita slipped away from the others, pushing and elbowing her way with the greatest difficulty. So excited was she that she entirely forgot she had not told of her intention to return to the city in Felipe's automobile.

There! there! was the woman! She had stopped before the confessional. On she pressed—she was by her side. The woman raised her arm, and then the disappointment. She wore a band of gold, to be sure, but it was not chased and the bracelet was set with a diamond, not an opal. Then, for the first time, she began to wonder if, after all, the person she had followed was the kind her mother would care to claim as a relative.

She gave a frightened look at the clock. How late it was! Seeing nothing of Alice and Carlos, she hurried into the plaza.

There was no trace of any one she knew. They had gone and she was left behind. What would she do? She had never been in the street cars in that part of the city, and she shrank from attempting to reach home in that way.

Much frightened, she went back into the Cathedral to think it all over. It was almost empty now, the crowd of tourists having dispersed.

After aimlessly wandering about, she came back to the altar, where she stood before the sacred painting of the Virgin.

Suddenly she started as a voice sounded close to her ears, a voice intended to be ingratiating in its soft accents, but carrying with it an intimation that made her shrink.

"La signorita," it began, "la señorita is lost, is it not so? *Quien sabe?* I will take the señorita to her friends."

She looked around. A well-dressed Mex-

ican stood beside her. Should she trust him? She hesitated.

Again he pressed her, repeating in almost caressing accents, "If la señorita will give me the bracelet I will take her to her friends."

Now she saw it all, it was that he wanted; she glanced at her arm, the bracelet had slipped below her sleeve and was in full view. "Oh, Daddy, Daddy," escaped from her half-paralyzed lips; and he was coming home the very next day. Was there no escape? Helplessly she looked from one side to another, feeling like a trapped bird, beating her wings in vain.

Suddenly she drew herself up to her full height, her eyes blazing. "I will give you nothing. I can find the way myself. You have no right, you—you—" She paused, trembling.

His tone became threatening. "Perhaps,



“ SHE DREW HERSELF UP TO HER FULL HEIGHT, HER EYES
BLAZING ”

quien sabe? It might be best—it might even be—the signorita,” he stopped, giving a quick gesture, and, for the first time, Carita noticed the presence of another man, stealing quietly toward them.

Ah! she understood the whole vile plot. They would seize her and hold her for a ransom. She had heard of people doing that. In agony, she glanced up at the sacred *tilma*. She understood now the feeling that actuated the pilgrims to kneel before the shrine.

And then the miracle! The heavy outer door swung slowly open, and, oh, joy! Felipe entered. At a glance he took in the situation, and, walking rapidly across the church, he was at Carita’s side before either of the men became aware of his presence. With one blow from his young athletic fist (he had not had his training in the gymnasium for nothing), he hurled back the Mexicans, mut-

tering between clenched teeth, "Cowards! dogs! go! or I'll have you both in Belem within an hour."

Without a word the men slunk back and, in less time than it takes to tell it, were out of the Cathedral, leaving Carita, half crying, half laughing, on Felipe's shoulder.

"Felipe, Felipe! how did you know I was here? Those dreadful men! What would I have done if you had not come?"

He shuddered, as he answered gently, "It was only a chance we came, for we were well on our way home when Katharine discovered she had lost her purse and I turned back to find it. The others are outside in the car. I came in to look for the purse, but, Carita, why didn't you tell me you were going back with us?"

"Oh, oh!" she moaned, "I meant to, but I forgot everything, you see, when I thought I had found the other bracelet, and I hadn't,

after all, and then it was too late, for you had gone. If I only hadn't worn it!"

"But what do you mean by the other bracelet?" he pursued, thinking she was half crazed by her fright, at the same time leading her to a stone bench near by. "And what should you not have worn? I don't understand at all."

"Why, Felipe, haven't I ever told you about my birthday bracelet?" and, incoherently, she poured out the story, at the same time taking the bracelet off and handing it to him.

"Now, I understand. It was this the scoundrelly fellows were after. It was lucky I came when I did, and, Carita, I'm sure you ought not to wear such a thing as this on the street. It must be worth any amount."

She was crying now, the tears rolling down her cheeks as she sobbed how she had longed for a sister or a cousin, and she was very

positive now, in the midst of her tears, "Some time I shall find the other bracelet."

Felipe was all tenderness, and feeling decidedly grown up of a sudden as he assured her with the greatest earnestness that he would help her in every possible way. "But, until we do find this wonderful person for whom you are looking, you'll just have to pretend I'm your brother or cousin or any old relative you want."

She was laughing gayly now. "Felipe, you're a dear, and I'll do that very thing." Her face clouded for a moment. "And, Felipe, we won't tell, will we? I mean about those awful men and how they wanted my bracelet?"

"Not on my heart!" was the ready response, but his blue eyes softened and his hand trembled a little as he pushed upon the heavy door and they went out together into the bright sunshine.

At the entrance they met Katharine, who was amazed at seeing Carita with Felipe. "Of all things! Where did you come from? I thought you went back with your mother. Goodness me, how pale you both are! Carita, you're honestly as white as a ghost; whatever is the matter?"

"Nothing at all," answered Felipe, with an effort to speak carelessly. "There was some mistake and Carita stayed behind to ride back with us, only we didn't know about it. It's a good thing we came back. But, tell me, did you find your purse?"

Katharine laughed. "Oh, yes, I found the purse all right, only there wasn't a thing in it—turned inside out and lying on the edge of the walk. There *were* five perfectly good Mexican dollars in it, but," she added resignedly, "there is no use crying over spilled milk, and since we found Carita it is quite all right."

Laughing and chatting, they climbed into the car and were quickly speeding back to the city, while Carita soon felt the disagreeable experience was almost, if not quite, forgotten.

CHAPTER VIII

DADDY

THE next morning Carita awoke a full hour before the usual time; as she rubbed her drowsy eyes she couldn't for a moment think what was going to happen, and then, of a sudden, she remembered, Daddy was coming home.

With a spring she was out of bed and hurriedly pulling on her clothes.

Yes, he would be home that very afternoon, and there was much to be done: she began counting off the things on her fingers: first, there was his den to put in order. She always did that herself because, when her father was away, it was she who held possession of it. Then there was her dress to

mend, the pretty white voile her father liked, and which she had torn the last time she wore it and had forgotten to mend, although her mother had reminded her over and over again.

Just then the thought of her experience at Guadalupe caused her to shiver, but she put it out of her mind with the determination that she would think of nothing disagreeable that day. "Then," she mused, "after everything else is done, I must practice over every single piece I have learned on my guitar," and she began gayly humming one tune and then another.

"What, little daughter, up so early?" called her mother, looking in at the door.

"Yes, *Mama*, *buenos días*, I simply couldn't lie a-bed when Daddy was coming. How long do you suppose he will stay?"

"Two or three months, I hope," was her

mother's response. "It will be at least that before the sugar grinding begins, but breakfast is ready, so don't delay," and, with a face like a rose, Carita half walked, half danced her way into the dining-room.

The morning passed quickly enough; and by two o'clock everything was arranged, even to the vase of flowers on her father's desk. She looked around with a sigh of satisfaction. "It's all ready for him, *mi madre*—the magazines just where he likes to have them, and the book he was reading when he went away with the bookmark in all right; besides," she stooped over to look at the tiny charcoal stove, "it's ready to light. Poor Daddy always feels so cold when he first comes home from the hot lands."

An hour later, dressed in the dainty white voile, she was restlessly playing on her guitar. How the time dragged! She glanced every few moments at the clock and at last

abandoned her guitar altogether, going out on the balcony to watch for him.

There were ever so many cabs passing, one after another, and at least six times she was sure one was going to stop at the monastery, only to be disappointed.

Suddenly she leaned forward eagerly. "Oh, mummy, mummy, quick! here he is now!" and she had left the balcony and flown down the old stairs before her mother could answer.

And it WAS Daddy; her great, splendid Daddy, all bronzed up by the hot sun. As they came up the steps together, his arm around her waist, for the first time Mrs. Andrews could not but notice the strong resemblance between the tall athletic man and the slender girl of fifteen.

It would be hard to tell of the days that followed; it seemed as if Carita could scarcely bear to have her father out of her

sight; she never tired of hearing his stories of his life on the big *hacienda* (where they ground thousands and thousands of tons of sugar cane each year). Then there were walks, arm in arm, in the Alameda gardens; there were drives up the Paseo and, best of all, the evenings when they all three sat together in the cozy den, and the tiny charcoal fire did its best to keep "the shivers off," as Carita expressed it.

It seemed as if she had never had so much to tell him before; all about the girls and Felipe.

He was interested in everything, often interrupting to tell her how tall she was or how grown up she seemed. He made no comments when he learned she had gone to a bull fight, but looked more than grave when, one evening, she told him of the scoundrelly fellows at Guadalupe, for she simply couldn't keep a secret from Daddy.

Almost fiercely his hand tightened on her shoulder as he forced himself to reply calmly, "My little Carita was plucky indeed, but she must be careful never to wander off alone again, and, promise me," here he had bent her head back, looking full into her honest black eyes, "never, never to follow strange people. I tremble to think what might have happened if Felipe had not come back."

"Yes, Daddy, I promise," was the earnest response; "and, oh, I almost forgot to tell you how red my opal was all the time I was in the church. It seemed like fire, and now, see, how soft and pretty it is to-night. But, now, Daddy dear, let's forget all about those awful men, while I play and sing to you," and she struck the opening chords of a Mexican love song, drifting from that to "Dixie" and "Home, Sweet Home," until the tears started from the big man's eyes.

It was very precious to him, this bit of home, after all the weary months so far away, and his voice was almost pathetic as he stroked the soft hair, saying, "My little daughter can never know how lonely her father is away off from civilization. If it wasn't for the thoughts of your mother and you, life wouldn't be worth living."

"But, I do know," she nodded her head as if she quite understood, "I do know because, you see, we're lonely, too. We talk of you all the time and wish you were here. You can't think how we miss you." They sat quietly for a while and then she broke out: "And, Daddy dear, what do you think? I've almost made up my mind to go to college and, after that," she hesitated, "do something worth while."

He threw back his head, laughing heartily. "The idea of going to college is all right. I quite approve of that—but, what do you

mean by doing something worth while? Tell me, who has been putting ideas like that into your head? As if it isn't worth while for you to simply live in the world without troubling yourself about anything else. Come, explain yourself."

"I don't quite know, but Katharine says there are so many things girls do nowadays it's hard to choose, and, honestly, I don't see," she was playing with the buttons on his coat, twisting them nervously with her fingers, "why I shouldn't do as much as other girls, do you, Daddy dear?"

His voice softened as he saw how very much in earnest she was and he answered very gently, "That's true enough, but my little girl must realize that, after all, she can do nothing as worth while as to make sunshine for her father and mother. Why, girlie, there won't be any sun when you are away off in the States being educated. We

shall count the days until you come back. Thank fortune, that time is nearly two years off. We musn't think about it now but just settle down to having a good time together while I am home." She smiled happily.

"I'm glad you're here, Daddy, to take us around to all the churches Easter week. You see," she choked a little, "after that experience at Guadalupe I would be afraid to go without you, and the girls must see every single thing, even to the burning of Judas the night before. I do wonder what they will think of all the fiestas."

They sat so long planning what they would do and where they would take the girls that Mr. Andrews was surprised, on looking at his watch, to find how late it was and hustled Carita off to bed without further ceremony.

It *was* nice, just as Carita had said, to have Daddy for escort, for he made it his

special care to see that they did not miss a single thing, and next to being in Rome at that time is the experience of being in the City of Mexico. First there was the interesting spectacle on Palm Sunday in the Cathedral when the crowds of peons holding the long palm branches congregated and knelt to have the branches blessed.

The whole week before Easter every church in the city was draped in black, and only the most mournful of funeral marches were played on the organ; but on Easter Sunday Alice declared she should never forget the wonderful hymns of praise and triumph that resounded through the great chapels. The somber black crêpe that had wound the columns and wreathed the altars had all disappeared and given place to banks of flowers. Daddy took them everywhere, even waiting patiently by the booths near the Alameda while they made their purchases,

from miniature Judases to funny skeletons. The flower market, always wonderful, was "glorious" Katharine declared as she came home one morning literally loaded with a wealth of lilies and roses.

"And they're not raised in hot houses either," cried Alice, burying her nose in the fragrant mass. "Isn't Mexico a paradise of flowers? I just wish the people in New York could see them. All the flowers in all the churches there, massed together, couldn't begin to equal the ones we saw in front of the high altar."

Katharine seemed much impressed with the symbolism all around her in this Catholic country. While the others laughed a little when they chanced upon the ceremony of washing the feet of the disciples she was quite indignant and declared vehemently: "I don't see a single thing to laugh at; to me it's beautiful to carry out the Savior's

ideas, though I'm neither Indian nor Catholic. And I think it is the finest thing in the world to see the way the poorest and most miserable beggar acts as if he had a personal ownership in the Cathedral. I counted fourteen families eating their lunch in the Cathedral yard, and you could see they acted as if they really belonged there."

When Easter was finally over, they were all, as Alice expressed it, "perfectly frazzled out" and ready to take things easy for a while. But every day brought some new interest, and the next few weeks glided swiftly by.

One evening, when Carita and her father were having a cozy chat together, he suddenly surprised her by saying, "I don't believe you can possibly guess, sweetheart, the plan I have in my mind?"

At that she looked very wise and asked for three chances. Laughingly he con-

sented, and she buried her face in her hands for nearly five minutes but then gave up. "Daddy, dear, I'll take it all back and confess I haven't the faintest idea what you have in your head. It seems to me we've done everything that I can possibly think of."

"Well, then, it's just this. Do you remember, once upon a time, when you were a wee bit of a girl, your mother and I took you to Cuernavaca?"

"Yes," she interrupted, "after I had had my tonsils out and we went to a hotel with a great big *patio*, full of all kinds of trees, besides a roof garden where we used to watch the sunset."

"That's the very place," he responded. "How well you remember."

"Has it anything to do with Cuernavaca?" she resumed.

"It just has," and he smiled at her de-

light. "The fact is, I have a friend who owns one of the old houses there. He is going with his family to the States for four months and has asked us to occupy the house while they are away."

"Oh, Daddy, Daddy!" her eyes were shining with joy as she clapped her hands, "how perfectly glorious! Tell me, when are we going?"

"Soon after the Fourth. We musn't miss the celebration at the Tivoli Gardens. That, too, will give me time to attend to business here, while you and mother think over what you want to take with you. Of course, we shall not give up our *vivienda* here."

"It's all too good to be true"; Carita paused, as if overwhelmed with ecstasy, "and tell me, Papa, may I have a house party and ask the girls? Why, I'm sure they never could imagine such a perfect story-book place as Cuernavaca is."

At his answer, "Yes, yes, of course, anything you wish," she threw both arms around his neck, hugging him until he cried for mercy.

CHAPTER IX

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

THE day the drawn-work was to be finished Alice decided to go for it herself. So she and her sister stopped for Carita and the three set out for the funny little adobe hut where Giulia lived with her sightless old grandmother. They knew the way perfectly, for this was only the last of many trips. Leaving the car at the Cathedral they turned down a narrow side street and in about fifteen minutes came within sight of Giulia herself, sitting in her doorway bending over her drawn-work frame.

"Buenos Días," they called in a chorus, and *"Buenos Días"* was the answer as the

little maid looked up from the work upon which she was so intent, to wave a greeting to her friends.

As they stood beside her, watching the patient fingers carefully weaving in and out the delicate threads, the cobwebby gossamer piece of linen seemed strangely incongruous with the rude surroundings. The room within was in semi-darkness with only the door to let in a streak of sunshine; in one corner was a coarse straw mat which served the purpose of a bed, and in the other the old grandmother was stirring frijoles over a few coals in a tiny stove. On the wall was a rude picture of the Virgin and before it a bunch of fresh flowers.

But Giulia was already looking up with a rare smile and modestly holding the completed cloth for their inspection.

Alice's eyes widened with pleasure and impulsively she caught the young girl's hand.

"It is beautiful! I never saw anything so exquisite as the cross and crown design. There won't be a lunch cloth in New York to compare with this. Tell me, what shall I pay you?"

Giulia beamed with pleasure at the warm words of praise, and with a happy smile, named a modest price of a few pesos. Carefully and deliberately, Alice folded away the linen in her hand bag, opened her purse, counted out the money, hesitated, turned to Carita and said in an undertone, "I can't do it."

"Do what?"

"Pay her so little. It would be a sin. Such fine work is enough to ruin her eyes."

Carita made no reply, but by her expression it was plain to see she felt the same, while Katharine openly agreed with her sister. "You couldn't get the plainest kind of a cloth in the States for any such amount."

The little maid, not understanding what they were saying, was evidently distressed lest she had set too high a price, and when Alice at last placed in her hand a sum nearly double what she had asked, was almost overwhelmed by her generosity.

“No, Señorita, it ees too much.” She faltered with a motion of dissent, but Alice insisted, and, when the girls finally left her, she was still calling blessings upon them and repeating, “*Mil gracias, mil gracias!*”

Coming once more in sight of the Cathedral, with its twin towers, Katharine suggested they step in for a moment, arguing, “We haven’t been in once since Easter Sunday, and it would be nice to see it again, in every day clothes.”

As they passed through the great doors into the nave it seemed very quiet and solemn in the dim light. The walls and columns, bereft as they were now of festal

decorations, appeared almost plain. An occasional worshiper knelt before one or another of the confessionals and a little group of women, gathered before a chapel some distance to their left, was all that first caught their attention.

Suddenly the cry of a child broke the silence, and Carita darted forward in the direction of the chapel; stopping at the entrance, she looked back at her companions and, with her finger on her lips to enjoin silence, beckoned them to her side.

“Girls! it’s a baptism—at least two dozen babies! Oh, I’m so glad we happened in. See, that’s the baptismal font, and here comes the priest. Isn’t that little curly-headed baby a darling? How close his mother holds him!”

A baptism is always of interest and, particularly, with such a setting. As Alice and Katharine pressed nearer, the old priest

made the sign of the cross on one of the little foreheads, and the frightened infant lifted up his voice and cried, "Exactly as if he were an American baby," whispered Alice.

But Carita's attention had been drawn away from the group by the gesticulations of a ragged urchin who stood some distance from them with a huge bunch of keys in his hand. Carita knew that the carved doors immediately behind him were always locked, and at once suspected something out of the ordinary.

The little boy (she afterwards found his name was Giovanni) raised his forefinger and beckoned to her.

What could he mean? She glanced at Alice and Katharine. They were engrossed in the baptism and did not notice the incident. Again the little Giovanni motioned invitingly, at the same time pointing to the doors behind him.

Now she understood, he was trying to tell her he wanted to show her something. Instantly her resolution was taken. She had always heard there were wonderful treasures behind those closed portals, and that few people had the opportunity of seeing them. Another glance at the priest—by this time there were a half dozen children crying lustily. The girls would never miss her. Her spirit of daring, fairly roused, her blood pulsed madly through her veins. In another moment she was by the little fellow's side and whispering, "Yes, I'll follow."

With a delighted, "Si, Señorita!" watching his chance until he was sure he was unobserved he quickly unlocked the doors and together they entered the passage beyond. Without a word, Carita followed him as he turned, first to the right, then to the left and, after passing through a dimly lighted room, to the left again.

She began to feel confused, and completely lost all sense of direction. How foolish she had been to come so blindly! She felt frightened, and thought of her father's admonition, "Promise me you will never again follow strange people." Just then Giovanni looked back at her with an engaging smile, and her fears took flight before the frankness of his expression, and she comforted herself with the reflection, "*He* isn't strange people, he's only a little boy!" Still, the disturbing thought persisted, "Giovanni could not have any right to the keys. Who knew? They might both be locked in Belem because of the escapade."

But her guide was stopping now before the half open door of a small room. Gently pushing it open, and reverently making the sign of the cross on his forehead, he beckoned Carita to enter.

Once across the threshold, she forgot

everything—her fears, her doubts, all taking instant flight, for there, before her, was the most beautiful picture she had ever seen. She knew nothing of painting, but felt, instinctively, that she was looking at a great work of art.

It was only four feet square, a graceful figure of the Virgin holding a beautiful infant. The canvas showed the marks of age, and had been patched near the mother's head, but nothing could detract from her surpassingly sweet face or from the winsome Jesus in her arms.

As she silently gazed, a glint of sunlight fell full upon the Virgin's figure, lending a new glory to the faded blue of her mantle and emphasizing the half suggested halo round her head.

But Giovanni was already impatient and gesticulating to her to return. She dared not delay and, with the new emotion still

tugging at her heart, she turned reluctantly from the wonderful vision.

First to right and then to left Giovanni hurried, and Carita found it hard work to keep up with his frantic pace. When they finally reached the nave an angry caretaker pounced upon the luckless boy, snatched the keys from his hand and locked securely the ponderous doors, at the same time uttering a volley of Mexican imprecations which made the young girl shudder.

Giovanni cowed, as if struck, and turned piteous eyes toward Carita for protection. Quick as a flash, she held out a piece of silver to the scowling man. Instantly his mood changed and he almost cringed before her as he exclaimed, "Si, Señorita, *muchas gracias.*"

Turning to her little friend, she said, in simple English, "Thank you, I shall never forget the picture you showed me!" Then,

pressing a few centavos in his hand, she quickly made her way to the chapel where the priest was murmuring a blessing over the wailing head of the twenty-fourth infant.

"Where have you been?" cried Alice, discovering her presence, "and what have you done to make that little beggar make love to you? He is staring his eyes out this very minute."

"Behind closed doors!" was the demure answer, as the three walked away together, "and I've seen the most wonderful picture. The little fellow you say was making love to me was my escort. His father is one of the caretakers and must have left his bunch of keys where Giovanni could find them."

"If this hasn't been an interesting morning!" broke in Katharine. "One never can tell what one is going to come across in old Mexico."

When Carita, somewhat haltingly, told her

adventure at home, her mother and father did not press the reproof she instinctively felt was in their minds, but Mrs. Andrews remarked thoughtfully, "I am convinced it must have been the picture which is the gem of the Cathedral. It is one of the most valued paintings in the republic, and is a carefully guarded treasure. While I would be careful, hereafter, about venturing behind closed doors, I cannot but be glad you have seen this masterpiece of the great Spanish artist, Murillo. To look upon such a picture may well be considered an experience in any one's life, and carries with it a blessing which those who have been so fortunate can never forget."

Then her father told her of the picture of the "Assumption" by the same artist he had once come across in the old Cathedral at Guadalajara. Her mother got out her book of foreign photographs and Carita was

more glad than ever that she had seen the famous picture. She declared she loved Murillo's Madonnas even more than she did those of Raphael, and she almost screamed with delight when, in one of his "Beggar Boys," she discovered a resemblance to her own little Giovanni.

CHAPTER X

FORTUNE TELLING

“**D**ADDY, dear,” Carita protested, the morning of the Fourth of July, “do I really have to wear the American flag when I like the Mexican one so much better?”

“But the American flag is our own,” argued her father, somewhat disturbed; “it surely is not a question of *having* to wear it. You ought to *love* it; besides, it’s the most beautiful flag in all the world,” and he proudly pinned one on his breast, holding another out to her.

“I don’t some way feel one bit as if it were my flag,” she insisted, “I think the red, white and green is prettier; besides, it shows the

eagle on the cactus, with a serp it in its talons, which is ever so interest^{ing} because, you see, that's where the city was built."

"There's a story about the Stars and Stripes," was the quiet rejoinder. "The thirteen stripes are for the thirteen original states, and the stars show the number of states now in the union. You ought to be proud to wear the Star Spangled Banner."

"Ye-es," she admitted doubtfully, "in a way I am, although I don't honestly see why I need care anything about the thirteen original states, even if you were born in Boston, and grandfather fought in the Revolutionary War. History is a bit tiresome, anyway." The look of real distress deepened on her father's face, and she hastened to add, "But I'll wear it, provided I may wear the other too."

With that he was obliged to be content, and was wise enough to make no comment

when, with studious care, she arranged the two on her blouse in such a way that the red, white and green was over her heart.

The Fourth of July is a great day for Americans in foreign countries, and this year arrangements had been made for an especially patriotic celebration in the Tivoli gardens, the popular resort of Mexico City.

When Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, with Carita, arrived at the entrance they found the rest of the party waiting for them, each with a tiny American flag conspicuously displayed. The gardens presented a gay appearance; festoons of red, white and blue reaching from tree to tree, even the fence posts draped with the colors of the two countries artistically blended, while popcorn, ginger ale, lemonade and ice cream cones were offered for sale in numberless booths decorated in the patriotic colors.

It was surprising how many Americans

were in the City of Mexico, and cordial greetings were being constantly exchanged.

Promptly at ten o'clock the exercises were to begin, so, after a tour of the grounds, Mr. Andrews ushered his party into seats as near as possible to the grandstand, that the speeches might be distinctly heard. On the platform were men prominent in the so-called American colony, together with two or three high in the diplomatic circles of Mexico.

"There he is, don't you see him?" cried Carita, greatly excited, leaning forward and nudging Katharine, who sat directly in front of her.

"Who? For pity's sake, explain," was the somewhat impatient answer.

"Can't you imagine? President Diaz, of course. Don Porfirio, we call him. Isn't he simply splendid?" was the proud rejoinder.

And so he was—this thick-set man, with

breast covered with orders, and a suggestion of the Indian in his bearing. He was slightly above the average Mexican in height, with high forehead, fine, straight nose, and powerful chin. His was a wonderful personality.

Alice whispered to Carmen she had never seen such eyes. "I can imagine how they flash when he is angry, and yet they're kind eyes, too. I must say I agree with Carita, he is perfectly splendid," and Carmen's mother, overhearing the conversation, smiled approvingly. "Si, he thinks everything of los Americanos. *Está muy bien.*"

"And there's Limantour, we've passed his house ever so many times; don't you remember the bougainvillea climbing over the front?" put in Lucette. "My father says he's the biggest man in Mexico, except, of course, Don Porfirio."

But the band was playing "America" and

even Carmen was stirred, waving her handkerchief as wildly as the rest.

Next, a tiny girl recited, "The Breaking Waves Dashed High," and then the Declaration of Independence was announced. It was read slowly and with full appreciation of its import.

There was a real thrill in Carita's heart at the words, "And for the support of this declaration, with firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor." There must be something fine about those ancestors of hers who had sacrificed so much for liberty, and she gave her father a look of such understanding that, if it had been possible, he would then and there have taken her into his arms.

When the assembled audience rose in a body, at the splendid strains of the "Star Spangled Banner," Mr. Andrews noticed

that, while his little, willful daughter still wore both flags, it was the Stars and Stripes that occupied the place of honor over her heart.

As the crowd dispersed Don Porfirio took his stand at the base of the platform and, with kindly courtesy, held out his hand to each and every one. That this was more than a perfunctory act was indicated by the warm grasp and the gentle glance from his softened eyes, and not one of those who took the proffered hand but thought of the incident when the shadows darkened and the revolution came that sent the grand old man away from his people to whom he had given the love and devotion of his great heart, as well as the best years of his life.

“Now for the ball game!” shouted Carlos, and, in less time than it takes to tell it, the three boys were off in an adjoining field where the great American game was being

played, leaving the others to watch the somewhat milder sports scheduled for the day.

“What on earth are they doing?” asked Katharine, her eyes wandering to some half dozen Indians dancing wildly round a huge sombrero.

“Exactly what they seem,” responded Dolores, who had witnessed such sports many times before. “This is the famous ‘Sombrero Dance,’ and the idea is to see how near they can come to the sombrero without touching it.”

But Carmen was excitedly calling their attention to the crowd that was rapidly gathering around a greased pig which was scurrying here and there until a lucky peon might succeed in capturing it in his blanket.

They had turned from the pig to see what a lank, black-haired Mexican intended to do with three cocks he held under his arms,

when a sudden clap of thunder warned them a storm was at hand and, with one accord, they hastened to seek shelter.

"I never can remember about the storms," said Katharine as they huddled together in the corner of one of the bedraggled booths near the entrance, while the boys tried to dodge the drops as they hurried off in search for chance cabs. "It's the funniest weather. This morning it was as clear as clear could be—not a cloud in the sky, and now it bids fair to be a perfect deluge."

"That's what the rainy season is," laughed Carita, opening one of the umbrellas with which Mr. Andrews had provided himself, and holding it over three of the girls, as she saw a procession of three cabs advancing toward them.

The monastery safely reached before the rain changed to hail they were none the worse for their experience, although disap-

pointed that the fun had so soon come to an end.

In the midst of the impromptu luncheon that followed, consisting chiefly of frijoles and tortillas, Katharine exclaimed suddenly, "If we were at home, I would suggest we wind up the day with a marshmallow toast!"

"A marshmallow toast!" repeated Carita and Carmen together. "We never heard of toasting marshmallows, how do you do it?"

"Never heard of toasting marshmallows! what poor benighted creatures!" echoed Alice pityingly; "they're the most delicious things! You showed us how to eat mangoes and we'll return the compliment, only," she looked around questioningly, "where can we toast them?"

"There's the charcoal fire in the den," suggested Carita doubtfully.

"The very thing! the slower they roast the better."

"We'll go for the marshmallows," put in Felipe and Carlos, regardless of the rain, which was still coming down in torrents. Suiting the action to the word, they were off to the neighboring dulceria and back again before the chairs were drawn up in front of the tiny fire and the necessary hatpins collected.

"You take a hatpin, so!" exclaimed Katharine with emphasis, proceeding to demonstrate, "and then you turn it until the marshmallow's all a very delicate brown. This fire is just perfect," and she handed the first one to Mrs. Andrews, who declared it was the most delicious thing she had ever tasted.

It was a pleasant ending to the glorious Fourth—this marshmallow toast in the old den, although, in spite of the slow fire, more than one was burnt to a crisp. They had almost finished the three-pound box the boys

had brought when Alice called for a pack of cards, offering to tell their fortunes.

"Yours, first, my dear," she said, turning to Carita, and beginning to shuffle the cards with the air of a professional.

Carita cut for luck, and having made a wish, turned up a card which, much to her delight, proved her wish would come true. Another shuffle and Alice laid the cards, one after another, on the table, the entire crowd watching with intense interest.

"There's a letter first. I shouldn't wonder if it contains very good news and a present (you certainly are the luckiest girl), and oh! a journey!"

"That's to Cuernavaca!" interposed Carita; "we're going next week to stay four whole months, and, girls, I've been intending to ask you anyway, to-day—mother and daddy say I can have a house party as soon as ever we get settled, and we'll have the

grandest time. Mexico City is interesting all right, but wait till you see Cuernavaca. Isn't it funny how it turned up in the cards?" When the chorus of excited exclamations following the announcement had died away, and the girls had all declared how crazy they were to go to Cuernavaca, Alice announced, turning another card, "But this can't be the trip to Cuernavaca, because the cards say," she paused doubtfully, "that you are going to take a long journey, and I am afraid it will be very dangerous."

"A dangerous journey! Where do you suppose I can be going?" pursued Carita, wild with excitement at the thought.

"What's that?" interposed Henrique, looking over Alice's shoulder, "a dangerous journey, did you say? Sounds as if the fortunes must be a little mixed. It's Carlos and I who are going on the dangerous journey, to-morrow—up to the mines. They say

the brigands are stirring up no end of trouble."

"Hush!" whispered Alice, shuffling the cards and bending over them again. "I declare, Carita, I never told a fortune like yours before."

"What is it? what is it?"

"A fair child comes into your fortune soon. I wonder what that can mean. A fair child, and a great change! That's all I can tell you to-day," and she resolutely gathered up the cards. "Now, Henrique, it's your turn."

"No fortunes for me," he answered; "the disappointments will come fast enough without having them told by the cards. I resign my turn to Katharine."

"It's easy enough to know what her fortune will be," was Alice's laughing response. "I can tell without even shuffling that she will win all the honors in her class in college."

Then, as her sister cut, "Didn't I say your heart's desire would come true? There's the answer before you." Mockingly, she bent over the cards. "But, I do declare, here's a dark man appearing already, so you've a romance ahead of you. Come, Felipe—I'm dying to see what the Fates have in store for you."

"Health and wealth and happiness," she mused, "that is, everything seems to come your way at first, but," she hesitated a moment, "why didn't you ever say anything about your military aspirations?"

"Because I have never had any," and Felipe watched her laying down one red card after another. It was interesting how deftly she could handle them.

"Well, you're all mixed up in some kind of war, and I can't tell how it's going to come out. Still," she went on earnestly, "there's love in your fortune, love and con-

stancy, only there's separation, too, and soldiers marching and fighting."

"I don't like to discountenance your fortune telling," broke in Carlos, laughing, "but, in my opinion, you or the cards have somewhat confused Felipe and me. I'm the one that has military aspirations and, if I had my way, I'd be after the bandits this minute."

"Well, I give up," was Alice's answer as she helped herself to another marshmallow. "If I can't tell fortunes to suit, I can toast marshmallows," and she held it over the coals, carefully watching it turn a delicate brown.

By this time the rain had stopped and the party soon broke up—declaring they had never before spent such an altogether delightful Fourth of July.

"And to think," called back Katharine, "we actually shook hands with the President

of Mexico, and heard the Declaration of Independence!"

"A journey, a fair child and a change," mused Carita to herself. "Whatever can it mean? Of course, there is nothing in fortunes, but it does sound terribly interesting."

CHAPTER XI

A STORY BOOK HOUSE

THE remaining days before the trip to Cuernavaca were busy ones: there were ornaments and dishes to be packed; favorite books to be selected, besides the zerapes and other things Mrs. Andrews felt she could not do without during the proposed four months' absence from the city. At the last moment she decided she must take her favorite idol, the one Carita used to turn face to the wall when she was a little girl because she was afraid of the "big smile." Mrs. Andrews was much attached to the grotesque relic, which had been dug up by some workman in the monastery garden, and, besides, it was valuable, being almost exactly like one in the museum.

Then Carita had treasures of her own, ranging from her ivory set to some favorite pictures which her Aunt Emily had sent from Europe years before. So it came about a big box was dispatched by express the day before in addition to their own big trunks.

The railroad to Cuernavaca follows, at least in part, the old picturesque trail through the mountains by which the Spaniards passed in the days of long ago. Carita loved to travel and sat with her eyes fixed on the passing landscape as closely as she had done when she was a tiny girl.

"You see, sweetheart," her father said, leaning over from his seat across the aisle, "the Spanish galleons would bring their cargoes to Vera Cruz and, from there, the freight would be hauled overland from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean in great carts, drawn by oxen or mules over these very mountains. Then the ships from the

Philippines and the Indies would bring their precious spices and silks to be transferred in the same way to Vera Cruz and sent from there to Spain. Those were stirring times!"

Carita watched the patient mules toiling up the mountain sides with their loads of fruit and produce, trying to fancy how it must have seemed in the days of which her father spoke.

As the little wood-burning engine puffed its way round and round the steep hills and many curves, from time to time they caught glimpses of the city they had left behind them, now soft in opalescent tints that half veiled the distant views and again lying fully revealed in the bright sunshine. At last the summit reached, they began the descent into the smiling valley of Cuernavaca. And, as it had been long before they had bidden their last farewell to the City of Mexico, so now this little town coquettishly showed herself,

from time to time in the dim distance until suddenly her red roofs and soft colored houses were right at hand, and the brakeman called, "Cuernavaca!" in such stentorian tones that Carita fairly jumped from her seat.

Waiting at the station were street cars, drawn by mules, and Mr. Andrews was about to hail one when Carita cried, "Oh, Daddy, Daddy, let's take the red coach, it's so much nicer!" and, a few moments later, they were rattling over the cobble stones through the narrow winding streets while the cochero, in his handsome embroidered sombrero and glove fitting trousers, cracked his whip at the four mules, and drew up with a flourish at the entrance of one of the oldest buildings in the sleepy little place. Carita felt as if she were living over some dream: the hotel was so exactly as she remembered it, with its barred windows and little loopholes through

which, many a time in the long ago, the approach of the enemy had been sighted.

There were the corridors where she had played hide and seek with Francisca, and the big *patio* with the fountain in the midst and, oh, joy! she broke away from her father and mother for a moment, coming back with the cry, "It's here, mother! the big banana-tree, and there's a bunch of green bananas in the same identical place near the top."

There was a lovely dinner served in the corridor, with the sweetest of sweet corn, and the juiciest of fresh fruits. After dinner was over it was time to watch the sunset, and Carita led the way up the narrow stairs to the old roof, crying out as she reached the top and discovered one and another familiar object in the distance, "There's the palace and the cathedral and the bandstand!"

It was an entrancing view of the whole

valley with the marvelous background of encircling mountains, besides a riot of flowers and *patios* and churches. "And from here," interposed Mrs. Andrews, "one can get the real significance of the name, Cuernavaca (Cow's Horn). Don't you see the rocky ravine, 'Barranca,' the Spaniards call it, and doesn't it remind you a wee bit of the crooked horn of a cow?"

"Yes, indeed," replied Carita. And then, with sudden impulse, as if tired with the excitement of the day, she sat down, pulling her father beside her, on an old wooden bench. "And now, Daddy dear, won't you please pretend I am not grown up at all and tell me the story of the Popo and the White Lady as you used to do when we were here before?"

So, as the sunset colors deepened on the snowy summits, he retold the old, old story so beloved in Mexico.

“Once upon a time, Popocatepetl and Ixtacuhuatl were giants, but, for some reason or other, having displeased the gods, they were turned into mountains; in despair, the woman died, but the man was destined to live on and gaze forever upon the form of his beloved one.” Mr. Andrews leaned over, smoothing his little daughter’s hair. “Can’t you see the woman’s shape, lying there, covered with snow? And, from time to time, we’re told, Popo groans in his anguish and tears of fire run down his wrinkled cheeks. The people call them ‘Popo and his bride, the royal lovers,’ and fancy that they keep guard over the valley, he with his head erect, she in her shroud of glittering white, while the hills bloom with flowers in their honor, and the snowy clouds rest gently upon their breasts.”

Long they lingered on the roof, for, after the sunset colors had faded, the moon rose

over the mountains, lending its witchery to this quaint old town of a thousand memories.

The next morning Carita was up early, eager to see the place which would be their home for the next four months. A few moments' walk brought them to their destination—a big square house, with a plate on the front giving the date as 1822. There were French windows, grilled to the top, heavy wooden shutters and a door that made Carita think of a church door.

Letting themselves in by an immense key they found themselves in a kind of vestibule or hall, beyond which was an immense *sala* which Mr. Andrews declared must be at least seventy-five feet long. The floors were all of glazed tiles and the pillars of the corridor carved. Then there was a lovely big *patio*, filled with a profusion of flowers and trees.

As Carita made one discovery after another she gave little characteristic cries of ecstasy.

“Mummy, here’s the funniest stone bench in the kitchen, and the hall has exactly the place for your idol, and, Daddy dear, what do you think I found in the *patio*? a really, truly croquet set. Think of playing croquet here! Won’t the girls be wild over it all?”

By afternoon she had exhausted every adjective in her vocabulary, and was so tired her mother suggested she sit down quietly in one corner of the *patio*, near the old well, and write her Aunt Emily about it, and this is the letter she wrote:

“Dear Aunt Emily:—

“How I do wish you could see this lovely, funny old house we are in. Mother says you don’t have thick walls in the States and as these are at least four

feet through you would notice them right away.

"Our door key is so big and heavy Daddy says we will have to stay at home because we can't carry it round; but there's a tiny little door by the side of the other one, and we can squeeze through that if we make ourselves small enough.

"And, what do you think? In the *Zaguan* (that's the hall, you know) there's a niche in the wall that mother says is meant for a saint's shrine, and her big stone idol exactly fits it and looks too cute for anything.

"Then there's the *patio*, with orange trees and peach trees in bloom, besides jasmines and honeysuckles and a lovely pepper tree and a swing.

"I brought my ivory set with me because I love it so, and I most forgot to tell you there's a grand tiger skin rug on the floor.

Mr. Carlton shot it himself in the hot lands. It is so real I almost jump when I come into the room, and his mouth is wide open just as if he would eat me up.

“The girls are coming to-morrow, and I know they will be simply crazy over it here. After they are gone, I will write you again and tell you all about my house party. We expect to have perfect oodles of fun.

“Here’s about one hundred kisses from your devoted niece,

“CARITA.

I mean MARGARET ANDREWS.”

CHAPTER XII

THE MILITARY BALL

IT was a disappointment that all the girls did not come to the house party, but Lucetta was having trouble with her eyes, which made it necessary for her to stay in the city for treatment, and a note received from Carmen explained that her mother had made arrangements for them to spend a few weeks at Cuernavaca at one of the hotels. She expressed many regrets and ended by stating, "It will be almost the same because I shall see you every day, and we shall be '*vecinitas*' (little neighbors)—*adelante*."

The others, Dolores, Alice and Katharine, arrived one afternoon with suitcases and camera, and were sufficiently crazy over the

trip, "the funny picture book town," and the "perfectly darling house," to satisfy Carita.

That very night they went to the band concert at the pretty little plaza, and laughed themselves, as Alice expressed it, "almost sick," over the men, in big sombreros, solemnly walking in one direction, during the intermissions, while the women, as solemnly, with their inevitable blue rebozas round their heads, walked in the other, without so much as a smile when they came face to face.

The first few days were given up to sight-seeing, for Cuernavaca is not lacking in history and her romance. There is the State Capitol (once the palace of Cortez), a beautiful building of white stone, boasting a garden gay with hibiscus, geraniums and roses, and the old cathedral, in which is a clock which was sent as a present to Cortez from Charles the Fifth.

Adjoining the plaza is the market with its attractive fruits and vegetables; here, too, the pottery sellers have their stands, the bright vases lending a touch of color to the scene, and in the center, a quaint circular stone fountain where the women come for water, bearing their jars as gracefully on their heads as the women of Bible times.

A little distance out are golf links and pretty stone bungalows, built by wealthy Americans, an evidence that this little sleepy city, with its balmy air and perfect climate, had been already sought as a health resort.

But more beautiful than all else are the old Borda gardens, and the girls listened with fascinated interest as Mr. Andrews told them of marvelous tales of the fabulous wealth of one Jose Borda.

“Even Mexico, you see, can boast her millionaires who have risen from poverty.

Originally, Jose was a French Canadian who wandered into old Mexico and was so fortunate as to strike it rich in the mines. This garden was one of his special fancies and, while the Borda family no longer exists, this remains to remind us of their glory."

"Wait until you see it," interposed Carita, "it's the loveliest place, even if people do say it's going to wrack and ruin."

In spite of all they had heard, the girls were quite unprepared for its beauty; the tiny paths, leading nowhere; old fountains, all the more beautiful in their ruins; occasional groups of statuary, shady walks beneath tropical trees. The mangoes by the lake were laden with fruit, and it was "such fun" to pick them from the ground and eat them without any forks.

There were, too, the avacado or alligator pears, great cypresses, and coffee trees in bloom, with their white flowers. From the

half crumbled walls lizards darted, and the terraces were, many of them, a wild tangle of vines.

Once discovered, the gardens were a favorite spot, and many were the camera views snapped in picturesque places.

The girls had been in Cuernavaca just a week, and were in the *patio* one afternoon playing croquet when Carmen appeared. Dolores had just succeeded in sending her ball through the last two wickets, thereby becoming a rover, when Katharine discovered her, daintily making her way toward them. She was dressed in pink, with fussy ruffles, her hands carefully gloved, and she carried a changeable silk parasol to protect her complexion from the sun. Carita thought, too, she detected a suspicion of powder on her nose.

“*Buenos días*, so sorry I could not come

before. I planned it every day, but you know, 'mañana,' " and she laughed slightly, seating herself as she spoke in the swing chair under the pepper tree. "And how do you like Cuernavaca by this time?"

"It's perfectly splendiferous," began Alice, enthusiastically, while Carita disappeared into the house to ask her mother to make some lemonade.

Waiting until she was fairly out of sight, Carmen leaned forward, speaking rapidly, half under her breath, "I have a plan. To-day is a *día de fiesta*, and to-night, at the hotel, is a ball, you understand, a grand military ball. I want you to come."

"A ball!" Alice and Katharine clapped their hands. "Carita was saying the other day she wished there was something going on."

Carmen frowned slightly, digging the end of her parasol in the ground. "Oh, Carita—

I hadn't thought. Do you think she would care to come?"

"Care to come?" echoed the girls in amazement. "We couldn't go without her when we are visiting, and besides, we wouldn't want to."

"*Y porque?*" Carmen shrugged her shoulders. "She would spoil it, just as she did the bull fight. It was *bueno*. It is hard to forgive."

"But she didn't spoil the bull fight. We didn't any of us care to stay. You see," Alice blundered a little, "we are Americans and look at things differently," then she added with directness, "we honestly can't go to a ball without Carita."

Carmen's eyes glittered. She had hard eyes, and they never softened as Carita's did. "As you say. It will be a grand affair, and the Mexican officers in their uniforms—you should see them! They are quite differ-

ent from Americanos," and she gave a gesture as if Carlos and Felipe were not to be mentioned in the same breath; "this is the first time Mama has consented—"

Dolores had kept quiet during the whole conversation, but now indignantly burst out, "It's the meanest thing I ever heard of to invite us and not Carita, when she's doing everything on earth to make us have a good time. I, for one, positively refuse to stir one step."

At that moment Carita appeared with the lemonade. There was an awkward silence as she looked questioningly at one and then another.

In a few moments, Carmen set down her glass, saying "it was time to go." Behind Carita's back she made a gesture, framing with her lips the words, "Remember, tonight, at the hotel. We will see you home."

When she had fairly gone, Carita broke

out. "Now, I want to know what's it all about? You needn't think I was so stupid that I couldn't see she was saying something she didn't want me to hear."

"Well," replied Alice, slowly, "she was inviting us to a military ball at the hotel to-night."

"And I think it was downright shabby that she didn't invite you," put in Katharine; "she can't forgive you because of the bull fight, and we all of us felt just as Alice did."

Carita flushed painfully. "I don't know as I care so very much, and I don't believe Daddy would let me go anyway. He doesn't like the Mexican men, though it might be nice for you."

"But we won't go," insisted Katharine.

"I don't think Tom would like to have me go," asserted Alice, although she privately thought it would be great fun.

"You're visiting," argued Carita, "and

want to have all the fun you can," then, as she saw her mother coming toward them, "let's let mother decide."

When the matter was explained, Mrs. Andrews thought a moment before she answered, "Of course, it is an opportunity to see a Mexican military ball, which is really a great event, and because Carita is not invited is no reason why you should not accept. Mr. Andrews could take you there and come for you."

"I positively decline," declared Dolores staunchly, "and that is all there is to it."

A little more hesitation and debate and it was finally decided that Alice and Katharine should go. Then came the usual anxious thought as to what they should wear.

It ended by Alice settling on her pale blue taffeta, and Katharine deciding on her favorite yellow. Carita found flowers in the *patio*; for Alice, a bunch of pink roses, and

for Katharine, some sprays of the jasmine.

When they were fairly off, Carita threw her arms about Dolores' neck. "You're the best of friends, and I won't ever forget how you wouldn't go, just because I wasn't invited."

Later, when Mrs. Andrews went to say good night, there was a suppressed sob in her little daughter's voice, as she whispered, "*Mi madre*, it isn't that I care about the ball so much, but don't you think it was just a wee bit mean of Carmen to leave me out?"

The next day there was much to tell.

"Of course it was fine," began Alice; "the lights and the music and the decorations, to say nothing of the dancing and the men in uniform, and you should have seen Carmen in a low-necked gown, all spangled, and a red rose over her left ear, and waving a great fan, every bit as much as her mother. There

was one officer she was dancing with most of the evening."

"I just about ruined my dress," asserted Alice soberly.

"Ruined your dress," repeated Carita, horrified.

"Yes. I went to get some punch with one of those officers, who was all gold lace; I didn't like the punch a bit either, it was so strong, and I guess he must have had too much, because his hand shook, and, the first thing I knew, the punch was spilled over my dress. I don't believe I'll write Tom about it. I can explain better when I see him. Some way, I can't like those Mexican men—in fact I'm perfectly sure they can't be compared with 'los Americanos.'"

And Katharine confirmed the verdict, sagely nodding her head, as if she, too, had had quite enough of Mexican military balls.

CHAPTER XIII

ON BURRO BACK

“**Y**OU certainly have the grandest collection of pictures,” Carita said reflectively, addressing herself to Alice who was seated beside her on the big tiger skin. “I honestly believe you have snapped everything in the City of Mexico.”

“I have tried to, at all events,” was the answer, “and I intend to mount them in exact order as soon as I reach home. Here’s the station where—”

“Is this I?” Carita interrupted, stroking the tiger’s head at the same time, “squinting, too. Alice, how could you? It must have been taken on the Viga, because there’s Henrique and Carlos grinning behind me. Yes,

and the native huts in the background, and the canal. What's this?"

"The desert,—I snapped that in the Pullman, while we were waiting for a pulque train to pass. You know they give them the right of way, and here's a maguey. We call them century plants in the States, and have them in pots."

"It's funny how the peons siphon them with their big gourds. Pulque, the horrid stuff! I never will forget the taste I had of it. How do you suppose they can drink it?"

"This is the dearest of all," and Carita held up one representing a Mexican girl, bending over her drawn-work frame. Then, with a dive for the next, "The flower market—it's perfect, and if here isn't the Iron Horse!"

"I like the Noche Triste tree where Cortez wept on the night of his defeat, and the

Jockey Club. Honestly, do you believe the tiles really came from China? And here we are, going up the hill at Guadalupe."

Carita shuddered involuntarily as she always did at thought of her experience in the Cathedral, hastening to change the subject. "I do believe you snapped the fighting cocks and the greased pig on the Fourth, to say nothing of the other notables. Yes, here's Diaz on the platform."

"And, so far, I've taken at least a dozen in Cuernavaca. I'd like to have every spot in it."

"You'll find no end of subjects to-morrow, when we go to San Antone," Carita sighed, "and the day after you're going back to the city."

"And in ten days more we'll be whizzing away to the States. To think this altogether delightful time in old Mexico is almost at an end!" Alice looked lingeringly over her

pictures. "I'll live it over a thousand times and, who knows, may give a talk before some missionary society on the land of mañana?"

"Quick, girls, look! the darling little fellows!" cried Katharine, the next morning, as some half dozen burros came in view, under the charge of a watchful *mozo*. As the girls hurried out from the house she continued, in surprise, "I do believe they're stopping here."

"You didn't suppose we were going to walk to the potteries, did you?" asked Carita, calmly.

"I didn't think anything about it, but," her tone was very doubtful, "I never rode a burro in my life."

"That doesn't make the least difference," put in Dolores; "all you have to do is to get on and stick on, no matter what happens,"

then, addressing herself to the *mozo*:
“What are their names?”

In reply, he glibly rattled off a string of words, among which they managed to distinguish, Anita, Niña and Chiquita.

“I choose Chiquita,” exclaimed Carita, “she looks the liveliest of all,” and, judging from the knowing smile that overspread the face of the *mozo*, her guess was not far from the truth.

Then Mr. Andrews appeared with sombreros for each of the party, explaining they would be needed to shade their faces from the sun, and there was a great outburst of laughter as they were tried on the girlish heads.

“Everybody mount their burro, and let me take a shot!” laughed Alice. “You can’t think how funny you are. One, two, three, look pleasant.”

“You can’t imagine how becoming that

sombrero is to your particular style of beauty," retorted her sister; "wait until I catch a snapshot of you for Tom's special benefit."

A few moments later the party set forth and Alice and Katharine soon dismissed all anxiety, for the burros, with an occasional prod from the *mozo*, behaved themselves most properly, although Chiquita, from time to time, stopped short, as if determined not to take another step, and Niña insisted upon turning into every gateway.

Single file they wound their way through the narrow streets past the pretty cream-colored houses towards the rocky ravine they had seen from the train where, mid groves of orange and banana trees, nestled Indian huts.

Zigzagging down the rough trail, with many a scream from one and another, they

forded the clear mountain stream just below the dashing waterfall.

Without hesitation the burros waded in, that is, all except Chiquita, who stopped short, evidently determined not to stir.

In vain Carita pleaded, "Chiquita, please go. There's a good little burro," gently touching her with the reins.

In vain the *mozo* prodded her fat sides—she only planted her feet the more firmly. By this time all of the rest were safely on the further bank waving and calling to Carita.

It was fully fifteen minutes before Chiquita suddenly gave such a tremendous bray that Carita almost fell off in surprise and then with a plunge was out in the stream and across it with such frantic speed that the water splattered way up into Carita's face.

They were soon in the Indian village of San Antone, stopping for Alice to take a

shot at the picturesque church with the mossy stone cross, in the neglected churchyard.

"How much farther before we come to the factory?" Katharine asked of the *mozo*, and in reply he showed all his teeth as he waved toward the adobe huts on both sides of the road.

"Si, Señorita, the houses are the factories." Following his gesture she noticed that the squatting natives were hard at work thumping the red clay and marking designs with the most primitive of instruments.

"Oh, Daddy," cried Carita, "see this pretty girl on the straw mat under the red zerape. What on earth has she in her mouth?"

The little Indian maid was trimming off the edge of a water jar with nothing in the world but a horsehair, holding one end firmly in her teeth and with the other smoothing the wet clay. She blushed, but went on with her work, absorbed in making a design, with

a piece of broken glass, that bid fair to rival the scroll on a Grecian vase.

In another hut they found two old women at work sorting tiny pieces of crockery preparatory to setting them in the clay—a form of decoration which belongs peculiarly to the Cuernavaca ware. Further on an old man worked with a potter's wheel and, as they watched in silence, Mrs. Andrews read them a little sermon, likening the molding of soft clay to their own characters formed by the experiences of life.

“As the vase comes forth perfect in its completeness, so are we better men and women because of trials and sufferings”; she paused a moment, then went on, “and we may learn a lesson, too, from the potters at work. What infinite pains they take turning the vase on the wheel, with what care they fire it in the rude kiln until at last it comes forth a thing of beauty!”

As she finished, the old man looked up with a rare smile, as if in appreciation of her words.

They chose many pieces to take home with them, and Carita was wild over a water jar with the design of a Mexican eagle inlaid with the broken bits of pottery.

Mounting her little burro, with the big piece in her hand, Carita leaned over to pat Chiquita's fat neck saying, "Now, Chiquita, dear, no more pranks or you'll make me drop my pretty jar," and the little animal only switched her tail and coquettishly moved her ears as if in reply, "I'll see about it, Señorita."

They ate their lunch by the side of a mountain stream where the women were washing, pounding the clothes to snowy whiteness, while a constant procession of graceful girls passed and repassed them, bearing water jars on their heads. Two or three chubby-

eyed children ventured near and were highly pleased when Carita called them, at the same time holding out a cake or two of sweet chocolate.

"*Gracias, Señorita, gracias,*" they called again and again as they scampered off to show their mothers who, in turn, smiled with a courtesy all their own. They are gentle folk, these potters of San Antone.

On the way home the *mozo* told them of two witches who lived in a nearby cave. "Tell fortunes!" he exclaimed. "Take Indian idol dug up long ago," and he spread out his palms to make his tale the more effective. "Burn flax and tell—oh, terrible fortunes."

"Are they true?" laughed Carita.

"*Quien sabe?*" and he shrugged his shoulders, "but, Señorita, you should hear."

"Oh, but we don't want to hear terrible fortunes, only pleasant things," and Carita's

mind reverted to the fair child and the strange journey at which, on the Fourth of July, Alice had said the cards hinted.

Not far from the city they stopped at the old sugar *hacienda*, said to date back to the time of Cortez, and lingered a while at the country home of Maximilian and Carlotta, with its half ruined walls and swimming pool at the side of the house.

Nearing Cuernavaca, the setting sun lent its glory to the scene, at no time commonplace, while the women in the huts could be heard patting the tortillas for the evening meal, and the air was pungent from the smoke of their weed fires.

They passed peons trudging home from work, and the Angelus sounded softly in the distance.

Alice and Carita rode ahead with the intention of stopping at the little postoffice, and quite unexpectedly found themselves



“ “SEE, THIS VERY MOMENT SHE HAS TOSSED HIM A
ROSE!” ”

close upon the hotel where Carmen and her mother were staying.

Suddenly Alice motioned. "Look ahead, what is that man doing, standing in the middle of the road, with his guitar? I would think him some kind of a wandering musician, if he wasn't in uniform."

"Can't you guess?" was the reply; "he's playing bear, and, if I'm not mistaken, some fair maiden is behind that latticed window." Convulsively, Carita grasped Alice's hand. "On my word, it is Carmen, and, see, this very moment she has tossed him a rose!"

But the figure in the window had already disappeared.

After the girls had gotten the mail—a big, fat letter from Tom for Alice and one for Katharine from her mother, they turned back to meet the others. But here, again, Chiquita asserted herself, by every little flirt of her tail declaring her obstinacy. She

would not go back and the more Carita urged, the more positive she became. "Come," her mistress pleaded, "be a good little donkey," but Chiquita, in reply, took matters into her own hands, or legs, as Alice laughingly remarked, by running straight into a neighboring shed.

"She don't mean nothin'," was the somewhat unexpected comment from the American owner of the establishment. "You see, she's my pet and likes to stop in for a bite on the way home if she happens to be anywhere near. Better get off and make yourself comfortable while she gets a little lunch."

And so, quite sympathizing with Chiquita's desire for "a bite," Carita joined Alice outside and they waited as patiently as they could until the owner appeared leading the little donkey.

"She'll be quite contented now," he ejaculated as he helped Carita mount. "Seems

like we all do better when our stomachs are full."

All this had occupied some time, so it was quite late and rapidly growing dusk. As they made the last turn they met Mr. Andrews and the *mozo* coming to look for them. "Your mother is greatly worried over your nonappearance. What was the matter? Did Chiquita misbehave?"

"Only to the extent of wanting a little lunch, and I didn't blame her one bit for that. I only felt sorry for Alice's burro because he wasn't included in the good things. And now, Alice, take a snapshot, please," and with that, she slipped off Chiquita's back and lovingly put her arm around Chiquita's neck. "It will be the very choicest picture in the whole collection."

CHAPTER XIV

CONFIDENCES

ANOTHER week and the girls were gone. As they stood on the platform, waving their handkerchiefs, Carita could scarcely distinguish one from the other, her eyes were so blurred with tears. They were to remain ten days in the city and then leave for their homes in New York. Of course, they had promised to write, but that was small consolation after all, and Carita felt a queer lump in her throat as she linked her arm in Daddy's and they hurried to catch the little street car. There was a diversion when the car ran off the track and all the passengers were requested to get out and lend a hand replacing it, but,

after that was over, the queer lump came back and would have lasted indefinitely if Daddy hadn't told so many stories and finally proposed a game of croquet.

She beat him three times in succession and then triumphantly seated herself in the swing with a "Please, Daddy, push me way up in the tree-tops."

After a while he crowded in beside her and they swung slowly back and forth, talking of all sorts of things.

"Daddy, dear," she finally asked, "aren't you ever going to take me to see your *hacienda*? I would so love to go."

"No, my dear," was his quick, positive answer, "it would be altogether too hard a trip way down in the hot lands. It's bad enough for me. Then think how terribly frightened you would be to find a tarantula in your shoe some morning, or feel a garrapata burrowing into your skin?"

She shuddered as she always did when he told her the terrors of the hot lands, and he went on, "I tell you what we might do, you and I. What would you say to a horseback ride to the old Aztec ruins, some eighteen miles away? Do you think you could stand so long a trip?"

"Oh, Daddy, yes," and she clapped her hands; "I can ride ever and ever so far without being tired."

"We could stay all night at some near-by place," he reflected, "and come back the next day."

"How perfectly splendiferous!" and she pressed her father's hand in a kind of blissful ecstasy.

So it was settled, and while he went to engage the horses she ran into the house to tell her mother, who was not one bit surprised, but had evidently known all about the plan before.

They were to make an early start and Carita was awake long before her mother came to call her. There was a thrill in her heart and she sang as she dressed. Think of it! Two whole days alone with her father. It would be a real adventure.

The morning was crisp and beautiful, the air was as clear as crystal, and the dewdrops sparkled on the grass. Carita's world seemed so bright to her as she rode proudly, side by side, with her adored Daddy. After an hour or so she drooped somewhat, for the sun was hot, but her father encouraged her, saying, "We're almost there, sweetheart; see the big hill in the distance? That's where the ruins are. We'll rest a few moments and take a fresh start."

They sat in the shade of a big palm tree, and Carita took off her sombrero, fanning herself vigorously. After a little, opening the box of lunch, they ate all the sandwiches

and fruit Mrs. Andrews had so daintily prepared. Then Carita patted her pretty bay horse, who whinnied with pleasure and daintily nibbled the lumps of sugar she had brought on purpose for him, and soon she felt perfectly rested and ready to go on.

Half an hour brought them to the hill her father had pointed out and, leaving their horses, they climbed to the confused mass of ruins at its top. The old walls cast strange shadows, and they played hide and seek with each other, Carita hiding behind the huge granite blocks and darting out unexpectedly as if to frighten him. At last they sat down together in the midst of what must have been an old temple, and Carita listened as her father told her of the old Aztec Indians who had been such wonderful builders.

“These sculptures are fully as wonderful as those on the monuments of ancient Egypt.

You've heard of the Pyramids of Egypt, haven't you?"

She nodded as she looked intently at the broad-nosed warriors in their feathered head dresses, and he went on:

"I suppose the underground caves and ovens were used for sacrificial offerings. People may have been roasted alive on this very spot. Strange, with all their civilization, they should have been so bloodthirsty."

It was too horrible to think of and soon they drifted on to other subjects, her father stroking tenderly the long braids, and finally asking her if she had made up her mind about the things "worth while" she had told him she wanted to do.

"Not exactly," was the earnest answer; "you see, there are so many things I can't decide."

"Such as what?"

"Oh, I might be a nurse, or even a doctor,

Katharine says, although I don't believe I would like to perform operations. Perhaps a lawyer would be better."

It was all he could do to keep from laughing outright at the idea of this little daughter of his performing operations or arguing cases in a crowded law court.

She was hurt, he could see that, and she went on hastily, "Katharine says ever so many girls in the States are taking up law, but Alice thinks one can do more good by working in the slums or lecturing on Domestic Science."

"How about being an archæologist?" he suggested.

"A what?"

"An archæologist," he repeated, "and study ruins like these, and write books about the people who made them. No one has ever discovered the key to the hieroglyphics, the picture writing of these old Aztecs."

"Then I could live in Mexico, couldn't I, Daddy dear, and we could go off on horse-back rides together and have the best times, just as we're having now." She was more than delighted at the suggestion, looking with new interest at the sculptured walls. "I really think I will consider that very thing. But, first, Daddy, there is something else I would like to do."

"What is that?" he inquired, curiously.

"I believe, if you don't mind, I would like to adopt an orphan."

"Adopt an orphan?" he repeated, wondering if he had heard aright. "Whatever put that into your head?"

"Well, you see, it's ever so lonesome now that the girls have gone, and soon you won't be here either. It's hard for mother, too, and so I thought it would help if I could adopt an orphan. I've read about such things. I've been hoping all the time I

might find the other bracelet, and some real cousin, but I am getting discouraged and think it would be safer to adopt an orphan, and then I would surely have some one to keep me company, Daddy dear.”

At first he did not know just what to say he was so surprised, and, with a sigh he touched the soft hair and remarked, “We will see about it, sweetheart, and, don’t you know, Daddy is trying his hardest to make enough money so he won’t have to be away, but can live at home with his wife and dear little daughter. To tell you a secret, I think I shall be able to manage it after a little, if all goes well. You wouldn’t be so lonely then, would you, dear?”

“Oh, no, indeed,” and settling herself against him contentedly she smiled happily, “Well, perhaps I won’t adopt an orphan, just yet.”

It was getting late, and time to think where

they should spend the night, so Mr. Andrews unhitched the horses, helping Carita tenderly to mount, and away they rode to a neighboring *hacienda*, through sugar cane as high as one's head.

It was the first time Carita had ever visited one of these great sugar estates, and she was much interested in everything she saw. There was the pretentious *hacienda* house, surrounded by farm buildings and thatched huts, the homes of the peon workmen; there was the *hacienda* chapel, with a bell in the arch over the entrance, which had been blessed, and whose special function was to call the hands in case of danger. At the first sound of this bell, the peons and their families would drop everything and assemble in the *patio*, while the señor armed the men with rifles which were always kept on hand; there were the mills to grind the cane and make sugar, and there were the trains of

burros constantly coming in and out the gates loaded with everything imaginable, from supplies for the family to heavy machinery needed in the mills.

The señorita and her father received a hearty welcome, the owner addressing Mr. Andrews as "*Amigo mio.*"

When Carita went into the room assigned her she found the furnishings most primitive; the chairs covered with calf's hide, and the canvas bed with a close canopy of mosquito netting. Altogether, it was a novel experience and if she had come upon a tarantula in her shoe the next morning she would have felt as if she were in the "hot lands."

Though they started before twelve, it was far along in the afternoon before they reached home.

Full of her adventure, Carita jumped from her horse and, hurrying into the house, met

her mother at the door. "Oh, Mummy, we've had the best time, Daddy and I—" She stopped, her mother's look was grave, and in her hand she held a telegram. Scarcely paying attention to Carita, she handed it to her husband. "It came yesterday, from the hot lands. I hope it contains no bad news."

Hastily he tore open the envelope, read it quickly, and, without a word, went into his bedroom, coming out almost immediately with his suitcase, which he kept always packed in case of sudden calls.

"Must you go at once, Edward?"

"Without delay. I can catch the five-fifteen train, if I leave immediately. I fear a serious situation, and it was most unfortunate I was away when the message came. There's trouble with bandits, and there's no knowing what may be the result."

"Daddy! Daddy!" cried Carita, clinging

to him until he was obliged to gently loosen her arms.

"Good-by and God bless you, my dear. We have had a very happy time together, and I shall carry the memory of it with me."

Another kiss and he was gone, with a quick gesture hailing a passing cab.

Carita turned to her mother, with a suppressed sob in her voice. "*Mi madre*, tell me what is it all about? Why should Daddy be so worried?"

In reply, Mrs. Andrews drew Carita close beside her on the leathern couch. "My dear, for some time there have been rumors of bandits in the north. The Mexican peon is naturally simple-hearted, peaceable and little inclined to insurrection, but, of late, men have been going through the country sowing seeds of discontent and stirring up rebellion against Diaz."

"Against Diaz?" echoed Carita, in amaze-

ment. "I thought Don Porfirio had done so much for the poor people."

"So he has, but he is growing old and those he has put in authority have not been popular. In reality, he is blamed for much for which he is not responsible. We will hope that the discontent will result in nothing worse than petty insubordination."

They sat long in the dim light, Carita's quick sympathies roused for the grand old man she remembered so well, and her heart full of vague misgivings for her father. She had never before dreamed that anything could happen to her great, splendid Daddy.

CHAPTER XV

FELIPE

THEY were in the corridor sewing—Carita and her mother. Carita had never made a dress before and was trying her very hardest, but in spite of her pains she had cut both sleeves for the same arm and, in despair, had just handed it to her mother with the plea, “Can’t you make it right, Mummy?” when the telephone rang insistently and she dropped goods and scissors in her hurry to answer the call.

“Long-distance!” Central called (in Spanish, of course) and, after some uncert buzzing, she heard a familiar:

“Hello!”

“Hello!”

"Is this you, Carita?"

"Yes," she answered. "Is this you, Felipe?"

"Yes; I'm coming by automobile this afternoon and will be at the hotel for a few days, so we can chase round a little. Will it be all right? I'm leaving for college next week."

"Indeed it will be!" she replied joyously, hanging up the receiver and hastening back to the corridor, the bothersome sleeves quite forgotten.

"Mother, what do you think?" Carita explained. "Felipe is coming this afternoon in his automobile and is going to stay three or four days in Cuernavaca." Her voice sobered. "He is leaving for college next week, so I suppose this is to say good-by. It seems as if every one was saying good-by." The momentary sadness passed and she added, "We won't think about the good-byes, will

we, Mummy dear, but just be glad he is coming."

"That's the best way," was her mother's reply. "If we let our minds dwell too much on the good-byes we would be sad all the time and that isn't what life is for."

The intervening hours dragged and it was close to three o'clock before the car chugged, chugged up to the house and Felipe sprang out, hot and dusty from the long ride but declaring he had had a "bully ride" and that the trip was any amount shorter and easier than by train. "Tell you what, there's nothing like an automobile," he repeated over and over again.

There was much to talk about and as they made their way into the house Carita had so many questions to ask, all in a hurry, that he had to put up a warning hand, exclaiming, "One at a time! Yes, I saw the girls off for the States. When it came to the point they

were sorry enough to go and said they had never had such a perfectly grand time as at your house party. And Lucetta and Dolores are well, but terribly lonesome without you. As for Carmen, I haven't seen her for an age. Oh, yes, Henrique and Carlos wrote they are having all kinds of trouble at the mines and may have to shut down completely on account of bandit raids. And, do you know," he went on earnestly, "all of Mexico is fast getting in an uproar and there are actually plots against old Porfirio himself."

Mrs. Andrews caught her breath, and Carita exclaimed excitedly, "Oh, what *is* the matter?"

"Oh, general discontent and all that sort of thing," he replied. "It isn't much fun to run a country these days and this Madero is making all sorts of promises if they'll only put him at the head."

"What kind of a man is Madero?" asked Mrs. Andrews earnestly.

"An idealist! There's no doubt but he's honest enough in his convictions that the peon is terribly abused, and he's perfectly sincere, too, in his plans to better their condition. But it won't work." And Felipe brought his boyish fist down in a determined gesture. "No, his theories won't work, and that's all there is to it. Why, the average peon wouldn't know what to do with land, if he did own it. Such reforms as he proposes must come gradually. Besides, it's a bad thing to rouse the Mexican; he's cruel and treacherous, at best."

"I agree with you," returned Mrs. Andrews. "If there is one thing the people down here need it is education, and I am inclined to believe Diaz is doing all that can be done along that line." She sighed anxiously and Carita looked up quickly, at the

same time laying her soft hand on her sleeve.

“It’s all so scarey, Mummy dear, and I’m so dreadfully stupid I can’t understand it at all and”—she shook her braid reflectively—“I don’t see how any one can help but love Don Porfirio, for all he’s so grand and stern. Don’t you remember how he smiled at us on the Fourth of July?” And her mind went back to the bright day when the fine old man had entered the Tivoli Gardens while the people went wild with enthusiasm and the band played the National air. How queer that every one should be turning against him? It must be, as Felipe said, very difficult to run a government, and she wrinkled her brows so thoughtfully that her mother hastened to turn the subject.

Felipe was to stay three days and there was so much to do—there were walks and drives in all the quaint places Carita had

grown to love; it was such fun to wander through the crooked streets leading to nowhere, visit the thousand places of interest and, best of all, play croquet in the *patio*. She hadn't had a really, truly game since her father went away. It was hard work to beat Felipe—she found that out—and more than once she had to give up, acknowledging him the victor. Then they would sit together in the big swing and, boy and girl fashion, dream away an hour or two.

"I can't think," she said soberly, on one occasion, "how it will seem this winter with you away. It was such fun last year when the girls were here and we were showing them the sights and having all kinds of good times, and now they are gone and you're going. Oh, dear, whatever shall I do?"

He laughed outright at her distress, replying lightly, "There's only one thing about it, you'll have to follow as soon as you can.

Think of the fun you would have at the football games and the proms. You know I could never ask any other girl to go with me except you."

She laughed a blithe little laugh, secretly pleased at his assertion, even though she didn't really believe one word of it.

"Well, no one knows what is going to happen, and if they send poor old Diaz away and Madero gets to be President no one knows what we will all do."

Her face was so troubled that he hastened to change the subject, laughing at her fears and inquiring if there wasn't some place she would like to have him take her in his car. "I mean some especially nice expedition that you never have been able to go on, because of the distance."

She shook her head meditatively. "I don't know of any place further than the ruins, and Daddy and I went there on horse-

back. It took us two whole days." Then, fearing he might be hurt, she added hastily, "Not but what I would simply love to go again. Then you could see the hier—" Oh, dear, why couldn't she remember that word?

Just then her mother came into the *patio*, saying, "I've been wondering what you young people are doing this long time."

"Trying to plan some excursion. Do you happen to know of any place worth visiting, within, say, twenty miles or more?"

"There are the caves—" suggested Mrs. Andrews, while Carita interrupted:

"Caves! I never went down into a real cave. It must be all spooky down there in the dark. It would be fun to see the stal—" and again she paused helplessly while Felipe, who was consulting a convenient pocket guide for motorists, suddenly declared the trip could be easily made in a day, especially

if they could start by five o'clock and have their breakfast on the way.

"Another adventure!" Carita's eyes sparkled. She dearly loved all-day excursions and ecstatically squeezed her mother's hand when Mrs. Andrews consented and added she would herself enjoy the trip quite as much as they.

The early morning spin proved altogether delightful: the air was fresh and pure, there was no dust from passing motors, the birds twittered among the branches and the volcanoes never looked so glorious as in those early morning hours with the magical tints of sunrise touching their snowy summits. As they rode along, Carita repeated to Felipe the story of Popo and the White Lady as nearly as possible in her father's words, ending happily, "Popo isn't crying this morning, and doesn't the White Lady look pretty and pink?"

It was quite seven o'clock when they came upon an old adobe building with a swing sign hanging to the wind and Carita cried suddenly, "Mummy dear, I'm as hungry as a wolf. Do you suppose we could get a glass of milk?"

"We can try," replied Felipe, stopping the car at a nod from Mrs. Andrews, and a few moments later they were entering the quaint old dining-room, while an old peon woman brought them fresh-laid eggs, a cracked pitcher filled with milk and the funniest rolls, "all twisted like the figure eight," Carita declared.

They were just about to resume their journey when a ragged urchin ventured near, holding out his brimless hat filled with a funny prickly fruit and saying softly:

"Will not the señora buy; they are from the cactus?"

"Oh, mother, do!" called Carita delight-

edly, at the same time reaching out and somewhat gingerly taking one out of his cap. "Daddy showed me how to take the prickles off, and they're ever so sweet and juicy."

"*Mil gracias, muchísimas gracias!*" shouted the little fellow, emptying the contents of his hat into Carita's lap and turning a somersault in grateful acknowledgment of the American dime the signor tossed him.

Once at the caves, a queer old man, in a tattered red zerape, presented himself as guide, gesturing and talking in such broken English that Felipe was the only one who could even guess at his meaning, and laughingly explained: "He is telling gruesome tales of some motorists who once ventured into the subterranean depths without a guide and were never heard of again, their skeletons being found years afterwards in a gloomy passage. Perhaps we'd better engage him, in spite of his villainous looks."

There were twenty miles or more of winding passages which broadened from time to time into chambers full of glittering stalactites. It was very weird in the semi-darkness, and more than once Carita put her hand out to her mother as they came upon strange shapes or caught the sound of gurgling water forever running beneath them, hollowing out other passages. There was the immense Throne Room, so called from two huge chairs formed by massed stalagmites and stalactites, and Felipe read from his guide book that if a New York skyscraper were placed within it, a man standing on the roof would require a feather duster with a handle two hundred feet long to sweep the cobwebs from the ceiling.

Carita gave a long sigh of pleasure as she looked around the vast chamber, flooded with soft magnesium light. "Mummy, dear, it's like a fairy palace, isn't it?"

There was the Vestibule, where the walls presented the appearance of Parian marble, and the El Campanario or bell tower, where the stalactites gave out a bell-like sound when Carita struck them gently as the guide suggested.

Altogether it was a day long to be remembered, and often afterwards, when Carita closed her eyes at night, it was to dream of the glittering fairy palace and the gurgling water.

The remaining days of Felipe's visit were gone before they knew it, and the car was in constant use almost from morning until night. It was amazing how fast they could spin over the roads and climb the hills. An afternoon was enough for the trip to the ruins and, "We had every bit as much time to explore," exclaimed Carita, "as when Daddy and I went."

It was only fifteen minutes' ride to San

Antone, where they found the same potters at work, the pretty girl under the red zerape giving them a gentle smile of recognition as she went on smoothing the edges of her jar with what might have been the same horse-hair, and the old man with the potter's wheel paused too, holding up a completed vase for their approval.

On their return, leaving Mrs. Andrews at the house, Carita and Felipe drove on a short distance to the Borda Gardens. Alighting from the car they rambled among the shrubbery in all sorts of dear delightful places, stopping from time to time to look into the branches of the great tropical trees.

How still it all was—scarcely a bird note broke the silence! The guavas lay thick upon the ground, and they picked their hats and pockets full so that “Mummy can make jelly,” Carita explained.

They loitered by the quaint old sun dial,

trying to guess exactly the time, while the sunlight filtered through the branches upon Carita's white dress, and Felipe began to wish, after all, that he wasn't going so far away.

They sat on the moss-covered seats of the half-ruined amphitheater, imagining there were gay players still masquerading there, and then wandered over to the little lake, where they idly fed the swans and ducks with the crusts which they had brought with them.

Finally Felipe burst out abruptly, "You won't forget, will you, Carita?"

"Forget? Forget what?"

"All the jolly times we've had together."

"Oh, no, I couldn't do that."

"Some way, I almost wish—" He stopped.

"Wish what, Felipe?"

"Hang it, that I wasn't going at all! If it

wasn't that you will be going to Boston to school in a year or two at the furthest, I would be half inclined to give it all up, and stay in Mexico City and go into the business as father wants me to. He says college will spoil me for business."

She threw an extra large crust to the graceful swan that was close to the shore.

"You'll write?"

"Won't I? Whole reams, telling all about the fellows and the fun."

There was the suspicion of a sob from the slender girl beside him, and he looked at her with a quick glance.

"Oh, Felipe, it just this moment came into my head that you won't be here to bring me flowers on my birthday. It won't seem like a really truly birthday," she ended mournfully.

There was silence for a moment, and the swan glided slowly away. Felipe turned suddenly:

“Carita, do you remember that day at Guadalupe?”

She shivered, his words recalling the disagreeable experience.

“You made me a promise.”

“A promise?” she queried.

“Yes, you said you would look upon me as a brother or cousin,” his voice was low, “or—any old relative.”

She laughed, a little embarrassed.

“I want you to tell me that that promise holds good, no matter where we are or what may happen; will you?”

She flung all the rest of the crumbs to the ducks that quacked loudly in their greedy efforts to get ahead of their fellows, then held out both hands in a quick gesture.

“Of course, Felipe, I’ll promise anything you wish, and it won’t make the least difference where you are. Don’t I know you’re the best friend a girl ever had?” Then, with

a glance over her shoulder, "It must be late, the shadows cover the old sun dial, and mother will be waiting dinner," and with that she ran lightly down the grass-grown walk and sprang into the car.

Felipe followed more slowly; he was vaguely troubled. Some way it seemed almost like desertion for him to leave Mexico at this juncture. Trouble was coming, there was no doubt of it, and, perhaps, if he remained, he might be able to be of some service to Carita and her mother when Mr. Andrews was away. And yet, after all, there might not be any real danger for Americans, this was his chance for college and, besides—he was taking his seat in the car—besides, every day he was the more convinced that Americans should give their best to their own country.

CHAPTER XVI

CARITA'S DREAM

AFTER Felipe had gone, Carita spent many an hour in the Borda Gardens. She would take her guitar or her embroidery and, with a kiss to her mother, be off, sometimes until dinner time.

She was quite too old to believe in fairies, no one realized it more than she herself, and, yet, often and often, she couldn't help thinking, when under the big trees, or dreaming by the lake, how nice it would be if there only could be fairies. Once Daddy had made a fairyland for her, under the orange tree that grew in their pocket handkerchief of a *patio*. He had taken no end of pains planting the thick moss he had brought all

the way from the hot lands for that particular purpose, and with infinite care had arranged little squares of looking glass, "pools of water," as he had explained to his eager little daughter. And Carita used to imagine that the fairies really visited the little square of green and dance there in the still moonlight nights when she herself was fast asleep.

So, perhaps, it was not surprising, after all, even if she WAS over fifteen years old, that she should weave strange fancies about the great tropical trees.

One bright afternoon as she sat sedately under the big eucalyptus, busily embroidering a sofa cushion, she had a most unusual experience. She was thinking how much the tree reminded her of the tales in Arabian Nights, with its bark constantly peeling, when she heard a peculiar "tap, tap." She looked up expectantly, suspecting a wood-

pecker, but seeing nothing, resumed her work. Again came the "tap, tap," and this time she saw not a woodpecker at all, but a slender, graceful figure, just stepping out of the tree.

Carita rubbed her eyes—she must be mistaken. She knew perfectly well there were no such people as wood dryads. Nevertheless, there stood before her the prettiest, quaintest figure imaginable, dressed all in brown with a gray brown cape exactly the shade of the bark of the eucalyptus. In her hand she carried a slender branch from the tree. As Carita, with difficulty, restrained her first gasp of surprise, the wood dryad laughed (such a low musical laugh it was) and making a little curtsey said, as she wrapped her cloak more closely about her: "So you thought you were too old to believe in fairies? Well, well! It is funny how prosaic you mortals become! I am Silva, the

Queen of the trees, and my home is in the Eucalyptus. I began to think you would never hear me. Yes," she nodded brightly, "I rapped at least a dozen times. All the trees have their nymphs, but I am the only one permitted to leave my home and really visit with mortals. That's the reason the bark peels as it does, to let me out. Would you like to see the nymphs of the other trees?" She laughed again, a soft, low laugh, and it seemed as if all the leaves were laughing with her, and then, touching what appeared to be a small knot in the eucalyptus, but which proved to be an electric button, she explained: "In olden times we had fairy spectacles, but now we simply touch the button—these modern improvements are much more satisfactory." Almost immediately the bright sunlight gave way to a soft opalescent light that bathed even the distant mountains in glory.

Carita gave one gasp after another, she had never imagined anything so beautiful; then, as her eyes became accustomed to the radiance, she began to discern graceful shapes on every side. In the lemon tree stood a wraith in palest green; the spirit of the orange was wearing some of her own blossoms, like a bride; the nymph of the palm fanned herself with the great leaves, while the olive fluttered her silver gray foliage. More graceful than the rest, the pepper, with pink berries in her hair, held out her feathery arms, while, in the background, she could discern the shapes in the mango and the guava, wildly waving in her direction.

Wider and wider opened Carita's eyes: "If I only knew what they are saying!"

"You shall," was the obliging response, and Silva held out a funny object. "Just put this to your ear, it's a fairy acousticon."

To her surprise, the confusion of sound

resolved itself into soft harmonies and she found that the trees and the birds were singing and talking to her.

“We love you,” sang the olive.

“We love you,” rustled the leaves of the pepper, while the lemon and the orange held out their arms in invitation to her.

She would have been content to listen indefinitely, but Silva, a little impatiently, roused her with the words, “This is only the beginning of what I want to show you. I have set my heart upon taking you to the land of the Story Trees, and it lies far away. You see, if I am not in my own tree by sundown I shall be turned into a mortal.”

Looking into the sky, she gave a low whistle and, as a fleecy cloud came floating down, she cried, “It is fortunate I have my new *aëroplane*, or we never could go so far this afternoon.”

When the cloud came nearer Carita saw

it was quite different from what she imagined. In fact, it resembled nothing so much as a great bird, something like a seagull, and as it reached the ground the graceful wings lay flat and still.

"So that's an *aëroplane*!" exclaimed Carita delightedly. "It is more elegant than an automobile," and as she snuggled down among the cushions she made up her mind she would ask Daddy to get one for her as soon as he could possibly afford it.

It was a wonderful ride, this trip to the Story Trees, and, as they mounted higher and higher into the blue heavens, Carita leaned far over the sides of the *aëroplane* for a glimpse at the wood dryads and held the acousticon close to her ear that a single note of the bird songs might not be lost.

It seemed only a short time when Silva suddenly cried, "Here we are, just above the land of the Story Trees!" and she pointed to

a patch of color below them. Slowly the great bird floated downward and, as it stopped for them to alight, a strange sight met Carita's eyes. Stretching as far as the eye could reach, were acres of trees abloom with variegated blossoms.

There were long lines of hedges made of lead pencils, sharpened for use; breaking one off, she was delighted to find another instantly grow to take its place, and very gayly she cried, "Oh, I do wish Katharine were here; she would always find pencils ready when she wanted to write a theme."

Hand in hand the two wandered through the wonderland of trees, each moment making some new discovery. The ground was covered with poppies which Silva called "inspiration," and Carita again thought of Katharine and her themes.

On their left was a clump of low shrubs, covered with buds, and when Silva explained

these were "similes and metaphors which would open when picked into beautiful blossoms," Carita nearly went wild with delight.

Soon they came to quantities of trees, bending under the weight of what looked like immense roses, and, after holding her breath as she exclaimed over their beauty, instinctively Carita stretched out her hands to gather them.

"These are the real Story Trees," laughed her guide, smiling at the girl's enthusiasm. "They are very attractive, even if some are a little too brilliant. It takes experience to pick the best, and I am sure your mother would prefer to have me select some for you." And with that she began gathering roses from one and another which, after a little, she handed in an immense bouquet to her friend.

Soon Carita's attention was attracted by

some tall trees to the right, fairly loaded with nuts.

"Those are the study trees!" cried Silva. "They are much more valuable than the story trees, although not nearly as popular. You see, nuts have to be cracked, and many people are too lazy to make the effort."

By this time Carita's eyes were shining. "Those would please Felipe best of all. He has just gone away to college and I am sure he would like to crack them. Next time I come, I must bring a basket and gather some for him." She nodded her long braid reflectively. "I never dreamed there could be such wonderful trees."

As she turned, she couldn't help noticing the queerest kind of a bush, not bigger than a coffee tree. It was covered with what looked "Exactly like paper doll dresses," she whispered to Silva, but, "of course, that can't be possible."

"Oh, yes, it can; anything is possible here—that is the tree of patterns—lingerie, dresses, blouses, coats. If you look closely enough, you will easily distinguish them."

Carita wished with all her heart that Alice could only see them, for she was confident they would help her so much with her trousseau, but Silva hurried her on, and pointed out a tree, away to the left, which she considered of far greater importance.

"That," she said, "is the most wonderful tree in all the world—the tree of ideas—it spreads and spreads and keeps on spreading until no one knows where it will stop. It is like the banyan, that strange tree of India, and the branches are constantly rooting themselves." As she spoke, she took hold of her companion's hand. "Come closer and see what you can discover under the leaves."

What was Carita's astonishment to see

countless tiny insects, clustered together, and she stood close beside her guide, listening with fascinated attention to every word she said.

“These are ideas that each morning fly forth to every part of the world. Many of them never come back, for they are seized and held by bright minds. They are, of course, invisible to mortal eye, but the consciousness of their presence makes itself felt by the receptive brain. No idea is ever lost, for, if it is not seized, it flies back to the tree to go forth at some future time. The idea of wireless telegraphy was flying about for years before any one caught it. So with most of the great inventions. Now, whenever you hear any one exclaim, ‘I have an idea!’ or ‘have caught on to something!’ you will understand better what it means, won’t you?”

“Oh, yes,” replied Carita, greatly im-

pressed, "and I do hope some ideas will come to me."

Silva nodded, "Of course they will, and I am sure you will be ready to catch them." Then, with a nervous glance at what Carita had thought was a magnolia blossom, but which proved to be a clock, gave the signal for her aëroplane and, in a few moments, on the back of the great bird, they were swiftly speeding again through the air and soon descending in front of the big eucalyptus.

"And now," cried Silva, "before I go into the tree I must be sure and turn off the fairy light and hide the acousticon under this flat stone so you can use it whenever you wish."

Just as the nymph disappeared into the tree and almost before the loose bark had fairly closed over her cloak, Carita heard her mother's voice, "So here you are! I've been searching everywhere for you. I have brought some sandwiches and fried chicken

with me, thinking it would be pleasant to have our supper under the trees. I believe you have actually been asleep."

Carita yawned and rubbed her eyes. "That's exactly what has happened, Mummy dear, and I've had the most wonderful dream. If only the white rabbit had come by looking for his kid gloves and his fan I should have been sure I was in Alice's Wonderland."

As they sat there eating their supper under the eucalyptus, Carita told her mother all about the nymphs and her ride through the blue sky, ending with a little sigh, "And I do wish it were true and that we could know what the trees and the birds are saying, don't you, *mi madre?*"

Her mother was silent a few moments, and then, entering into the young girl's mood, answered gently, "Yes, we grow only too soon beyond the age of believing in fairies,

and yet I wonder if the trees are not always ready to stretch out their arms in friendly intimacy and if the birds would not sing their sweetest carols to us if we would only listen."

As the leaves rustled above their heads, Carita felt she understood.

CHAPTER XVII

ANXIOUS DAYS

ONE month from the time Felipe left, Carita and her mother were back to the city. It was nice to be home, and there was a real satisfaction in arranging and rearranging until everything was cozy and natural once more.

"For all Cuernavaca was lovely, mother dear," exclaimed Carita, "there's no place like the old monastery, although," she added meditatively, "I shall miss the big tiger skin, it was so nice and soft to lie down on and put one's head close up to his big red jaws. I wonder if Daddy couldn't bring a tiger skin from the hot lands?"

Soon a letter came from Felipe, telling

about his trip and his impressions of the big university. "I tell you what, it's enough to rouse a fellow's ambition just to see the campus and buildings. I spent the whole of Saturday morning in the Agassiz Museum. I haven't seen much of Boston, they've been keeping me too busy right here in Cambridge and, goodness knows, there is enough to be seen here, from the Longfellow house and the Lowell home to the old elm under which Washington took command of the Revolutionary Army. But there's time enough for sight-seeing in Boston later on. Thank your mother for the letter of introduction to your Aunt Emily. I haven't used it yet, but some time I'll rig up in my best togs and go and call. I imagine she'll be glad enough to hear about that niece of hers in that heathenish country."

A half repressed sigh from Mrs. Andrews made Carita look up quickly.

"What is it, Mummy dear?"

"Nothing much, only your father says that while there have been no serious outbreaks in the hot lands the insurrection is doubtless gaining headway in the North and spreading rapidly. He mentions also trouble in the state of Morelos, near Cuernavaca."

"Oh, mother," said Carita quickly, "it was the peace fullest place!"

"Nevertheless," and Mrs. Andrews read aloud, "'Reports say that there have been raids in the country round about Cuernavaca resulting in assaults upon foreigners.'"

"Mother!" Carita's voice was tense with anxiety.

"'All this tends to rouse feeling against the Americans and I am glad you are safe in the City of Mexico.'"

Laying down the letter, again Mrs. Andrews sighed. They were safe enough, it was true, and yet, even Mexico City seemed different.

Although Diaz had opened Congress on the sixteenth of September with words of congratulation upon the accomplishments of the last century, and prophecies for future prosperity, the city seemed full of a vague discontent; even the street scenes had assumed a different aspect. There were knots of excited peons, and looks and occasional actions of disrespect shown to gringos.

The papers hinted that it would be better if Don Porfirio would resign his office as president, and the name of Madero was in many a mouth.

Still, they settled back into the usual routine, and Carita resumed her studies at the little school. Her ambition roused by her friendship with the two girls from the States, she was determined to prepare for the college education upon which she had fully decided.

To some extent, Lucetta and Dolores shared the feeling, but Carmen had left to

pursue her studies in a private school conducted by some Spanish friends of her mother's in another part of the city.

Carita heard frequently from Alice and Katharine, Alice writing more at length than her sister, who was hard at work in school.

"Just think, Carita, we have actually set the date for our wedding—December 28, three days after Christmas. We have decided to be married in church with all the Christmas decorations. I do wish you could be here, for it's honestly going to be the most beautiful wedding that ever was, and I do want you terribly for bridesmaid. But I'm not going to write any more about it, for Katharine will tell you all about it when it is over and will send you a box of wedding cake.

"I wish you could see my hope chest. I have the loveliest things, as every one agrees, especially those darling lunch

cloths and napkins I had drawn in Mexico. Then my Spanish lace and white mantilla! I can't begin to tell you how every one raves over them. Tom thinks everything of his ring and says the only thing we didn't bring home was a Chihuahua dog. Ugh! I hate the little naked things.

"We all hope there isn't going to be trouble in Mexico—I mean anything serious. Father is dreadfully worried over his rubber interests. But I think probably President Diaz can straighten everything out. He's such a perfectly grand old man. I have told ever so many people how we shook hands with him on the Fourth. Well, if things get too dreadfully upset you'll have to come to the U. S. and let Uncle Sam take care of you.

"I'm awfully sleepy now, so won't write any more, but, honestly, Carita, Tom is a darling and you simply must come and

visit us after we are married. We're going to live in an adorable little flat until he gets established in his hospital practice.

"*Adios* or good-by, whichever you prefer.

"Yours, ALICE MORGAN."

Carita always remembered the day Alice's letter came, because she had no sooner read it than the newsboys came by, crying shrilly, "Rioting in the streets! American flag torn down!" while a drunken man called out as he shambled along, "Death to the gringos!" and a crowd of peons shouted, "Down with Diaz!" "Viva Madero!"

Mrs. Andrews turned pale, her heart stood still—what could it mean? She had no idea the rumors of dissatisfaction were crystallizing into anything so serious.

They learned later that the mob of medical students had assaulted Americans on the streets, windows had been broken, and a car

carrying American children had been stoned.

"Oh, mummy, mummy," cried Carita, terror-stricken, "whatever is going to happen?"

Mrs. Andrews drew the little head down on her lap. "I do not know. If worse come to worst, we must go to the States."

"Without Daddy?"

"I cannot tell. We will hope for the best, and be very brave."

After this demonstration Diaz strengthened the police force and took every measure possible to safeguard the Americans. Many talked of leaving, protests were sent to Washington, and Daddy wrote he would come home as soon as possible, and it might be best for them to consider leaving Mexico.

Then everything in the capital seemed to quiet down, although there were continued riots on the border, and the so-called Madero party constantly increased in strength.

Thanksgiving came, an uneventful day to Carita and her mother because Daddy did not come home, and the turkey looked so big when they sat down to the table alone. After dinner, Carita spent the whole afternoon writing to him, and then, in the dusk, played on her guitar everything she could possibly think of.

In spite of the advice of his best counselors, Diaz took the oath of office as President of Mexico for the eighth term, assuring the people of the hopeful outlook for the republic.

Carita was quite happy, saying over and over again to her mother, "Everything is all right now, isn't it, Mummy dear?" while her mother would reply with every possible reassurance, although she was still troubled, fearing that the smoldering fires might again break out.

CHAPTER XVIII

A DISAPPOINTING CHRISTMAS

SOON it was time to think of Christmas presents, and Carita said thoughtfully one morning, "*Mi madre*, Christmas is ever so important this year, I have so many to give to," and she began counting off on her fingers. "Besides you and Daddy and Aunt Emily," she drew a long breath, "and Dolores and Lucetta, there's Alice and Katharine and Felipe. I wonder if he won't be a mite homesick this first Christmas away from home?"

In the days of shopping that followed, anxieties were forgotten.

It seemed as if Mexico City had never presented as gay an appearance as at this par-

ticular Christmas season; the shops on San Francisco street were bright with jewelry, cut glass and silver; windows were filled with favors to be used in holiday festivities from small china ornaments to imitation holly and Christmas trees; there were hundreds of gayly colored *piñates*, some in the form of oval jars, decorated with tissue paper and tinsel, others representing grotesque figures of clowns or ballet girls.

The streets around the Alameda were lined with booths, filled with baskets, pottery and curios, brought in from the country by the Indians, for the holiday trade.

At last Carita was satisfied, and exclaimed, "I do believe I've found everything I wanted! I am sure the girls will be pleased with these pretty silk rebozos, they're exactly the right length for evening wraps," and she threw one of the dainty scarfs gracefully over her shoulders. "Pink is the right color

for Alice, and Katharine can't help but look well in the blue." She chatted happily on "how Daddy would like his neckties she had crocheted for him, and Aunt Emily would be pleased with the brooch, made of the Mexican dollar, with the eagle cut out. Then, this is such a beauty pocket-book for Felipe, the outside all carved, and his name on the inside. I took the signature from his last letter and, see, how they copied it precisely."

She bent over a collection of small articles. "And don't you think, Mummy, the girls will love these tiny pottery dishes, exactly like the ones Francisca cooks with. As for the idols—I wonder if they are what Felipe would call genuine." She picked up some brightly colored gourds, beginning to wrap them in tissue paper. "I'll tell Alice to string these together as a wall decoration for Tom's den. I believe I have everything ready now except the dulces, you know they thought the Mexi-

can candied fruit was perfectly delicious."

Her mother smiled, "We'll try and get the packages off this afternoon," and Carita, with a loving last look at the treasures she had collected with so much pleasure, seated herself at her father's desk and began to write:

"Dear Girls:—

"First of all, I am going to send you '*Felices Pascuas*,' which is, of course, Merry Christmas. I do wish you could be in Mexico City now and go with mother and me to see the sights. December tenth is Guadalupe Day and the Indians come from every part of the republic to visit the shrine of the Virgin. They pour into the city by train, burro back or on foot, camping on the hills. You can see their camp fires miles away.

"The real Christmas celebration begins

on the sixteenth, and Mummy and I go to the churches to watch the *posadas*. Perhaps you don't know that *posada* means an inn, and the celebration is in memory of the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. You can't imagine how interesting it is to watch the queer procession, usually on donkey back, making the rounds of the churches and asking admission in a sort of weird chant until at last the answer comes, 'Yes, you may come in,' and the *posada* ends with a glad hymn of rejoicing.

"Everything is different from what it is with you. Christmas is the time for fireworks and the Mexican children don't hang up their stockings but put out their shoes, hoping the Wise Men won't forget to leave them some of their gifts.

"I am sending a few little things to hang on your tree. I hope you will like them

and that they will remind you of old Mexico.

"I am most dreadfully excited over the wedding and would give most anything if I could be there. Katharine, don't you dare forget to write me every single thing and send me that piece of wedding cake. And, Alice, I have found the best wedding present for you but I'm not going to tell you what it is. It will have to be a surprise to be appreciated.

"I know you will have simply 'oodles' of fun, and shall think of you every single moment on the twenty-eighth. Some of these days I am going to come and see you in that adorable little flat you wrote about.

"Lots of love from Mummy and me,
"CARITA."

Christmas was as bright a day as ever dawned in old Mexico. Carita's fingers tin-

gled a little as she got up in the early morning to see what was in her stocking. It was full to overflowing and she went into little particular raptures all by herself as she hopped back into bed with the contents in her hands. What a nice Christmas it was going to be!

To be sure, it was a disappointment that nothing had come from the States—not a package from the girls, Felipe or her Aunt Emily. Her mother had suggested that the Revolution was the probable cause and she couldn't help feeling resentful as she imagined the bandits enjoying her Christmas presents.

Hark! what was that? She sat up and listened. A knock at the door! In an instant she had slipped on her red kimono and was flying to open it. Her heart gave a quick leap. Perhaps it was Daddy!

In his last letter he had promised to "turn up" some time during the day. She opened

the door just a little way and, as she peeked out through the crack, her heart fell again. It wasn't Daddy at all.

Instead of the broad-shouldered man she had confidently expected to see, there was a messenger boy in his blue uniform.

Surmising something wrong, she took the yellow envelope and, all the Christmas fun gone out of her heart, she carried it in to her mother, standing disconsolately beside her as she opened and read it.

"What is it?" she asked anxiously.

"It is from your father," her mother answered slowly. "He can't possibly get away. Something has happened, unexpectedly, but he hopes to come soon."

"Not come? Daddy not coming!" It seemed as if she must have misunderstood. This was the very first Christmas he had not been home, and she had worked so hard to get the neckties finished.

Her lip quivered, and she choked back a sob. "It's the old bandits, I just know it is!"

"I am afraid you are right," her mother replied soberly. "The Revolution is growing in strength every day, but, there, child, your father wouldn't like to have your Christmas spoiled even if he isn't here. So cheer up and have your breakfast."

Nevertheless, the tears couldn't be held back and they kept welling up in her eyes all the time she was dressing. She hated Revolutions, and what was the use of them anyway? But the bright Mexican sun was shining in at the windows, and after a while the smiles came back—she and Mummy were together at all events, and Daddy had promised to come as soon as he could, and that might be to-morrow, *quien sabe?*

After breakfast she ran down into the garden—yes, there were white roses, whole clusters of them, and the oleander was full of

blossoms. She stopped a little while, trying to make the green parrot say, "Merry Christmas," instead of his incessant, "Polly wants a cracker," and then hurried back with her arms full of flowers.

"They don't have roses like these, Christmas time, in New York city, do they, mother?"

"Only in the shops; they have holly and mistletoe and icicles instead."

"Won't you tell me about Christmas when you were a little girl?" begged Carita, after the last vase was filled. She curled into the big easy chair beside her mother. "Something about the snow and ice. I do wonder how it would seem to be out in a real snow storm."

"I remember one Christmas," her mother began, "when the trains didn't run, and the telegraph wires were down, and not a single Christmas parcel reached us."

"That's exactly the way it is to-day," nodded Carita, "only here it's the Revolution."

"And there it was the snow. Those were great days, with the big plum puddings, and the family reunions, only"—a note of sadness crept into her voice—"it was never the same after your Uncle Robert went away."

As she finished, there stole into both minds the thought of the faded outlines of the child's face in the old bracelet.

So the day passed; Dolores had a jolly *piñate* party in the afternoon and, after supper, Carita lighted the tall Christmas tree in the *patio*.

It was all gay enough, with the candles shining so brightly mid the flowers and vines, while the moon came stealing over the roof, and the canary bird, just inside the corridor, woke up and sang a carol all his own.

Every night the tree was lighted, for Ca-

rita was determined it should not be put away until after Daddy had seen it. But the holidays passed, the candles were almost burnt out, and then, one evening, a click of a key was heard in the door, and there was Daddy at last.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PIECE OF WEDDING CAKE

YES, he was glad to be home: his arms tightened as he held Carita closer. He had been as disappointed as they that he couldn't come for Christmas. "But, never mind, I am here now, and, thank God, you are both safe. No mortal knows how worried I have been these last few weeks."

"Oh, we have been safe enough," replied Carita, stopping to give him another kiss, "if only the bandits hadn't helped themselves to our Christmas presents. Think of it! Not a single thing from the girls or Aunt Emily or Felipe."

"Very inconsiderate of them, to be sure," responded her father sympathetically, al-

though it was easy to tell from his tone that the loss of a few Christmas presents seemed a small matter in comparison with their safety, "but that reminds me, I stopped at the post office on my way from the station and there I found a letter and a package for you. Bless my soul, I almost forgot them."

"A letter and a package!" Carita made a dive for them. "How thick it is. Daddy, mother, it's from Katharine, she promised to tell me all about the wedding, and this," she scrutinized the parcel critically, "must be the piece of wedding cake!"

"Just a moment and we'll find out," and with that he whipped out his penknife, cut the strings and took off the brown paper wrapping. "I believe you're right, sweetheart, it looks amazingly like a box of wedding cake."

"Isn't it too darling for words? and with Alice's monogram in the corner," then, as

she opened the box and the thick slice of fruit cake came to view, "that's exactly what it is! but what is this funny dried up flower crowded in with it?"

"If I'm not mistaken," put in her mother, "it's a spray of orange blossoms, probably from her bouquet."

But Carita was already absorbed in her letter. "Just listen, Mummy, it was the grandest wedding you can ever imagine," and she read aloud:

"'It snowed the day before and so it was all pretty and white outside when we drove to the church a little before eight o'clock. It seemed to me the stars never were so bright before. There was an awning from the sidewalk to the steps and the whole church was decorated in mistle-toe and holly with some great white roses near the chancel.'

"It must have been perfectly lovely," breathed Carita, and Mrs. Andrews seemed almost as excited as she was herself, as she continued the letter:

" 'The church was lighted with candles, just dozens of them, and they gave the prettiest, softest light. There were six bridesmaids, darling girls, every one of them. It would have been perfect, Alice said, if you could have been one of them.'

"*Mi madre*, I never was a bridesmaid"—and Carita's eyes glowed at the idea while her father, as he lighted another cigar, laid his hand affectionately on her head saying, "Plenty of time for that, sweetheart, we don't want you growing up too fast. Next thing you'd be married yourself."

"Listen," went on Carita:

“ ‘I was the maid of honor and came after the others, all by myself. My! but I was frightened. I wore white charmeuse and had my arms full of roses. As for Alice, she was so tall and stately I scarcely knew her. She was on father’s arm and carried a perfectly gorgeous bouquet of orchids and her veil was caught with a spray of orange blossoms. I was so excited I haven’t a clear idea of anything after this except that the organ played the wedding march from Lohengrin and that Tom and his best man met them at the altar. Tom had a ghastly time fumbling for the ring, I was dreadfully afraid he had lost it.’ ”

Carita drew a long breath, stopping for a moment as she tried to fancy Alice so tall and stately walking up the aisle, then resumed:

“ ‘There was a grand reception afterwards at the house, a perfect crush. Everybody said they were the handsomest couple, and, oh, yes, she threw her bouquet and it fell in separate little bunches, and when I helped take off her veil I stole an orange blossom or two for you. You’ll find it in the box with the cake. There, I believe I have told you about everything, so Adios, from your chum,

‘KATHARINE MORGAN.

“ ‘P.S.—I forgot to say they went to Cuba on their wedding trip, and did I tell you that Felipe was at the wedding? He is a dear, even if he did talk about you every blessed moment.

“ ‘P.S.—again. Be sure and sleep on the wedding cake and don’t forget to name the bedposts. It never fails, you’ll surely marry the one you dream of.’ ”

What fun—to name the bedposts, she would never have thought of that, and, oh, she must have a taste of the cake right away and, when she had broken off three tiny pieces, her mother and father agreed with her it was the best cake they had ever eaten. Then she read the letter all over again, to herself, until she had it almost by heart. How she would have enjoyed being there! She heaved a long sigh, Mexico was very, very far away and it would be nice to go sometime to the States, she was quite convinced of that by this time.

There was a dreamy look in Carita's eyes as she finally laid down the letter—she was trying to picture it all, and to think Felipe had been there, too. She missed him more than she would admit even to her mother. She was quiet so long that her father at last gave a sly pinch to her arm saying, "Come

back to us, sweetheart," while her mother reminded her it was time to go to bed.

Then she suddenly decided she was sleepy and with a goodnight kiss for them both, holding the letter and the precious box in her hands, she went to her own room.

It was strange how her sleepy fit seemed to leave her as she stood before her mirror, brushing her hair thoughtfully. "If my eyes were only blue instead of brown and my mouth wasn't quite so big, I wouldn't be such a bad looking girl and, if my hair was only light and fluffy instead of long and straight and black but—it's no use! I can't change them. I am what I am, but I do wonder how I would look in white charmeuse with a big bunch of roses in my arms." As she mused she lightly threw a silk scarf round her shoulders. "So Felipe talked about me all the time! Felipe, away off in the United States.

“What was it he had said?” she repeated his words as well as she remembered them, “‘I never will want to take any other girl to the proms and the football games,’ ” and what was it he had wanted her to promise that day by the lake in the Borda Gardens? She remembered just how the ducks had grabbed so greedily for the crumbs, as she had answered, “Of course, I’ll promise anything you wish. Don’t I know you’re the best friend a girl ever had?”

She roused herself, it was getting late and her mother would be looking in to see why she hadn’t put out her light. She must name the bedposts, as Katharine had said. She began at the foot. “Carlos and Henrique and,” she flushed a little, “Felipe, of course,” but whom should she name the other for? For a few moments she stood undecided, then, with sudden resolution, she cried gayly, “Now I’ve decided. It will be the great un-

known.” She was so absorbed in naming the posts that she quite forgot to take a piece of cake to bed with her and, just as she was dozing off to sleep she remembered. Oh, dear, what a bother it was to have to get up, but Katharine had said it never failed, and, of course, she was terribly anxious to know whom she was going to marry. So up she jumped again, fumbled over her bureau in the dark, slipped the cake, box and all, under her pillow and then, in a second more, she was fast asleep, the wedding cake entirely forgotten.

CHAPTER XX

THE DECISION

LONG after Carita had left them, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews sat talking earnestly together, until at last he declared with great earnestness:

"The situation is a serious one and it is daily becoming more so. I cannot feel satisfied to have you and Carita here while I am obliged to be so far from you."

"But," she insisted, "the Americans, so far, have not been molested, and we could not be happy to go to the States without you. If it is best for us to leave, it cannot be safe for you to remain."

"It is an impossibility for me to even consider going. My business, as you know,

necessitates my being on the spot." He spoke irritably as if the whole situation had gotten on his nerves. "We should be separated for only a few months since I could join you as soon as the grinding season is over."

Mrs. Andrews sighed. She had never felt reconciled to his being so far away months at a time, and now her cup seemed more full than she could bear. Still, there was Carita to be considered, and, after some further discussion, she acquiesced in his wishes.

"I do not insist," he continued, "that you go immediately, "but only that you begin quietly to make preparations and be ready to leave, if the situation necessitates. I tell you frankly, I have little hope for Diaz and, should he be obliged to resign, I should want you to go on short notice."

It was no wonder that Mrs. Andrews did not close her eyes that night but lay awake,

her mind feverishly working over possibilities of trouble the future might bring.

So it was that when Carita entered the dining-room the next morning she found both her father and mother still agitated and abstracted.

"Yes, Mummy, I named the bedposts, just as Katharine said, and then, think of it, I slept so soundly I didn't dream one single thing."

She laughed. "Wasn't it too unromantic for words? I suppose that settles my fate and I shall never be married."

Her mother smiled faintly and Carita went on hastily. "But what IS the matter? You are both as solemn as owls? Have I done anything wrong?"

"No, sweetheart," and her father drew her down on his lap as if she were a little girl. "It is only that we have decided that it is best for your mother and you to begin to

plan about going to the United States."

"To the United States!" she repeated, amazed at the idea and looking helplessly at her mother as if she expected her to contradict the statement. "Go to the States! But—why?"

"Because the situation here is daily growing more serious and we cannot tell what may happen. I shall feel much better if I know you are making your plans to go."

"But, Daddy," and her eyes were big and troubled, "surely we won't have to go without you. Why, we couldn't do that!"

"Nonsense!" he responded, with forced cheerfulness, "of course you could, if necessary, but, come now, we will hope for the best and matters may right themselves, after all. Only I want to feel you are ready."

A few moments later he was whistling down the monastery stairs, leaving Carita and her mother to talk things over.

"Would we take everything with us," Carita asked, overwhelmed at the idea, "exactly as if we were never coming back?"

"Oh, yes," was her mother's reply as she jotted several items in her note book.

"Everything except—" and the young girl's voice was very mournful.

"Except what?"

"The best of all, Mummy—the balcony and the *patio*. I don't see how I could possibly live without them."

There was a moment's silence broken again by Carita:

"Mi madre!"

"What is it, dear?"

"I do hope we won't have to go away from Mexico because, you see, if we do, I don't believe I shall ever find the mate to my bracelet. I always felt that as long as we were here there might be a chance—"

"Yes, dear, I know. I have felt the same way, although so many years have passed that I have almost given up the idea of finding out anything about your Uncle Robert. Strange he should have so completely disappeared." She was lost in thought a moment, then, rousing with an effort, continued: "On the whole, I think it would be wiser if you would stop thinking about the other bracelet and look upon the one you have as a very dear and priceless heirloom."

"Perhaps you are right, Mummy—only it would have been so much nicer if only it could have turned out differently. I was counting so much on finding a really, truly cousin."

Her mother nodded sympathetically, it had been hard for her, too, to give up the long cherished hope.

Just at this point Mr. Andrews came home

and the conversation turned at once into other channels. Although they had fairly decided upon going, there did not seem any immediate reason for anxiety. "We will take our time," he said, "and let things drift a little. I may even return to the *hacienda*, but I shall be happier because I know that you will be ready if the occasion comes."

After a little, conditions became almost normal and Mr. Andrews left the city almost lighthearted over the turn affairs seemed to be taking. Nevertheless, Mrs. Andrews determined to be ever on her guard lest the unexpected should happen. It was nearly April before the feeling against Diaz flamed out again, although it had doubtless been smoldering all the time. Larger and more threatening crowds were seen gathering down by the Zocalo and on the street corners, train service to El Paso was entirely

interrupted and more than once the cry was heard, "Down with Diaz!" "Viva Mexico!" "Viva Madero!"

Finally one evening, when there had been a most dangerous demonstration near the National Palace, Mr. Andrews surprised them. He had been greatly worried over the reports that had reached him at the *hacienda* and had come to the city at the first opportunity. "You must leave at once," he repeated excitedly. "I understand the resignation of Diaz has been demanded and that he will be obliged to tender it as soon as he is able to leave his room. He has been in bed for a week past, suffering from an ulcerated tooth, otherwise he would have already acquiesced in their demands. I have cabled sister Emily that we will leave Mexico City to-morrow morning. She will meet you at the dock in New York and take you home to Boston with her. Later we will

make permanent plans." He spoke rapidly and in short disconnected sentences.

"We will leave for Vera Cruz by the first train. I shall go with you and remain until the steamer sails."

"But, Daddy," interrupted Carita, forcing back a sob.

"No buts!" he replied; "be a brave girl, it is the only thing to do, and, by the way, the trains have refused to take trunks on account of the congestion of travel. All you will be permitted is hand luggage."

"But, Edward," expostulated Mrs. Andrews, "how can we go without our trunks and boxes?"

"Nevertheless, it will have to be done. After all, possessions are of little value when lives are at stake. Put a few of your personal belongings in suitcases and let the rest go. Upon my return to the city I will try and store the others where they will be safe

until they can be sent to you in the United States."

"But, Daddy," pleaded Carita, "can't I even say good-by to the girls?"

"Utterly impossible," he replied firmly; "besides, I believe Dolores is already on her way, and Lucetta goes to-morrow."

"And Carmen? I haven't seen her for months."

"Her mother is said to be associated with the Madero party," was Mrs. Andrews' almost bitter response; "she is a dangerous woman, and, I understand, has been implicated from the first in the Revolution."

Carita's brain was in a whirl. All the foundations upon which her young life rested were crumbling. It was to her nothing short of a tragedy to leave home in this sudden manner and without a word of farewell to her friends. It was no wonder that her last night in the old monastery was a trou-

bled one and that when at last she fell asleep it was to dream that she and her mother were being driven out of Mexico by Carmen and her mother, disguised as brigands.

CHAPTER XXI

THE FLIGHT

IN the early hours of the next day with only a few suitcases and grips containing necessary personal articles for the journey, the three set off.

In the gray dawn everything looked strange, Carita held fast to her father's hand, looking back longingly on the outlines of her beloved balcony. Hailing a passing cab, they were whirled to the station, the Cathedral appearing like some great threatening giant and the National palace seemed like a prison house.

Arriving at the train they found all in confusion, for there had been no way of making reservations and many others were leav-

ing on the same train as they were themselves.

Carita and her mother were crowded into one seat while Mr. Andrews stood in the aisle, still holding his little daughter's hand, until room could be made for him elsewhere. The engine puffed out great clouds of smoke, the brakeman called "*a bordo*," and the train began to move.

Soon they were passing through immense maguey plantations and Carita sat quietly looking, with blurred eyes, upon the monotonous rows of stiff spikes. How queer it was! She wished she might have brought her guitar but it had seemed so big and heavy her mother had advised against it. She wondered how it would seem in the strange land to which they were going and she choked back a sob. If only Daddy were going with them! Then, too, her heart went back to the city and President Diaz. With

a throb, she thought of him as she had seen him on the Fourth of July. He had been loaded with honors on that occasion and, now, sick and suffering, the people for whom he had done so much were clamoring to drive him out of the country. Was it always like that, she wondered. When people got old, were they always turned against?

After that she brightened up, it was interesting to travel and perhaps she would come back sometime. Then, too, her father had promised he would be able to join them in the States—perhaps in a few weeks.

By this time they had left the magueys behind and were whizzing by an occasional *hacienda* and fields of Indian corn. Soon they began descending, by tortuous ways, the track crossing and criss-crossing into a ravine known to the natives as "little Hell."

The engine ran slowly and the train men kept a close lookout for desperadoes. It

was a dangerous place and every one breathed a sigh of relief at arriving at the old Spanish city of Orizaba, nestling amid her palms and gardens at the foot of lofty mountains which tower upward to their snowy peaks.

A twenty minute stop and the journey was resumed, the air becoming appreciably warmer at the lower altitude. They reached Cordoba, another old Spanish town, without incident, but not long afterwards the train began running slowly and finally came to a dead stop.

After a few moments, however, it steamed up again, went on a short distance, then backed and again stopped not far from a small dilapidated station.

Curiously, Carita looked out of the window. Boys and men were running back and forth talking in excited tones. After a little it was apparent the train would not go

on—something had happened. She looked anxiously at her father—it was evident he was puzzled and knew no more than she.

What could be the matter? Every one was asking questions and displaying considerable anxiety. There was a good deal of confused speculation, and Mr. Andrews got out of the Pullman to see what it was all about, returning in a few moments with the information that the train ahead of them had been wrecked by bandits. He was much excited as he explained that a bomb on the track had exploded under the engine, but, by a miracle, the engineer had escaped injury. Some of the passengers had been hurt, but rather the result of fright than because of the bomb, although the windows in the passenger coaches had been shattered by the explosion.

“Oh, father! will there be a bomb under

our engine?" asked Carita, terror stricken at the idea.

"There isn't the least danger of that," he replied; "the cowards will be afraid to do any more harm for a few days. The worst that can happen is a delay of an hour or so until a new engine comes from Vera Cruz."

Then they settled down to waiting, but, after half an hour, this proved exceedingly irksome. Finally Daddy proposed that he and Carita visit the scene of the wreck. It was perhaps ten minutes' walk and there was not much to be seen after all, some pieces of broken glass, a man hobbling about with a broken ankle, a woman with bad cuts on her cheek and lip, but, for the most part, the passengers were waiting in their Pullman, more or less patiently, and thanking their stars the explosion had not resulted any more disastrously.

It was very pleasant there on the outskirts

of a big banana plantation; on the other side of the track were miles of coffee trees, with their dark glossy leaves and bright red berries, and ahead of them stretched fields of pineapples and sugar cane.

“Daddy, dear, wouldn’t it be nice to gather some of the pretty berries for mother?” suggested Carita, and, with ready acquiescence, her father led the way across the track.

They walked slowly, stopping from time to time to pluck the berries, and had not gone far when they heard a child’s cry, and, a few moments later, came in sight of a little girl, not much more than three years old, sitting in the lap of her Indian nurse under one of the coffee trees.

Drawing nearer, they noticed the child’s arm was evidently broken, and a man, probably a surgeon, was using all his arts of persuasion to gain her consent to let him see it; all the while the distracted nurse was

crooning an Indian lullaby in her effort to soothe the little sufferer.

"Oh, Daddy, think how it must hurt!" cried Carita, quivering with sympathy, "poor little baby!" and Mr. Andrews hastened to proffer his services.

"It's a bad break," the doctor remarked; "the child was frightened by the explosion and we brought her here to get her away from the others. Angelica, the nurse, was carrying her and, in some way tripped over a half-concealed tree root, with the result that the child's arm was broken when she fell. Fortunately, it's her left."

In the meantime, the little girl continued to cry bitterly.

"Poor little baby," repeated Carita, impulsively kneeling on the ground beside her.

The wailing ceased for a moment as the child seized Carita's hand, at the same time saying, "Mamacita! Chula's hurt—Mama-

cita!" and, in another moment was sobbing her pain out upon Carita's shoulder.

"But the arm must be set!" urged the doctor, and the cruel task was finally accomplished—Chula allowing Mr. Andrews to hold her, while Carita sat near, with the little right hand in hers. After she had gone to sleep—crumpled up in Carita's arms—the doctor told the child's story, at least as much as he knew of it.

"Her mother was a poor young thing, scarcely more than a baby herself. I was called to attend her at the American hospital in Mexico City, where she was ill with typhoid fever. The father had been killed in a raid on Chihuahua. She seemed to feel from the first she could not live, and worried constantly about the child who was in her apartment, with only this faithful Indian woman to care for her. Chula is the Mexican term of endearment, meaning honey.



"CARITA SAT NEAR, WITH THE LITTLE RIGHT HAND IN
HERS"

The day before she died the mother made me promise I would look out for the child, and, if possible, to find its father's relatives, as her own were all dead. It seems there had been some sort of estrangement, way back, and she only knew they lived somewhere in the States. She told me where to find some papers and photographs, and while these are in my suitcase I have not yet examined them. The poor woman only died last week, and when I decided very suddenly to go to the States I concluded to take the child with her nurse, hoping to be successful in finding the relatives of whom her mother spoke. Should they not wish to acknowledge her, I do not know what I shall do." He flicked the ashes from the end of his cigar, remarking absently, as his eyes wandered to the sleeping child, "It would be rather a predicament for an old bachelor."

Carita hugged the child closer. "Oh, but

they will! They can't help but love her, the moment they see her."

"She is an attractive child, and I scarcely see how any one could refuse to give her a home, but, there are strange people in this world and they may not wish to open an old wound by assuming her care."

Mr. Andrews was deeply impressed by the story and asked the doctor to let him know how the matter turned out. . A faint whistle in the distance warned them it was high time to make their way back to their car.

The child was so heavy Carita was obliged to let Angelica carry her, but she walked close beside them, without letting go of Chula's hand for a single instant.

Reaching the Pullman, they found Mrs. Andrews alarmed at their long absence. "Where have you been?" she cried anxiously, looking questioningly at the Indian woman and the child.

Somewhat incoherently, Carita poured forth the story ending, "And, *mi madre*, if the doctor can't find out anything about her own people or—" her voice broke—"if they shouldn't want her, don't you suppose we might keep her? She's such a darling, *mi madre*. Please say yes."

Before her mother could reply to this amazing question, the big blue eyes opened sleepily and Chula murmured softly as she caught Carita's smile, "Mamacita! Mamacita!"

And what could Mrs. Andrews do but assent to the astounding proposition, although she warned Carita not to take the matter too much to heart for doubtless the real relatives would be found and, if so, there would be no possibility, she was sure, of their being willing to surrender their claims to the child.

"An estrangement such as her mother referred to is usually occasioned by temporary

anger and, doubtless, the feeling has long since died away, so, little daughter, I pray you build no false hopes of what will, in all probability, never come about. We will do our best to assist the doctor to find the relatives and see that little Chula is well cared for."

With that assurance, Carita was obliged to be content, and all the rest of the way to Vera Cruz sat with the child close beside her, pointing out the sights from the window or letting her sleep with the curly head pillowed on her lap.

As they reached the end of their journey and were about to leave the train, they heard the newsboys crying the evening papers. Mr. Andrews turned to his wife. "Diaz has resigned his office as President of Mexico."

Gravely he shook his head. "I fear years of anarchy for Mexico."

CHAPTER XXII

THE OTHER BRACELET

THERE were three days to wait at Vera Cruz before the steamer sailed, three days with the air as balmy as in June. Carita thought it great fun to walk under the tall cocoanut palms between her mother and father, while Chula and her devoted nurse followed close behind; her only fear being that some of the big nuts might fall on Chula's head; some way, she never thought of any harm coming to herself, or the others.

In fact, the child had stolen into their hearts and was a constant delight from the time she appeared in the morning, with the tangles all smoothed out of her curly head,

to the last thing at night, when she put up her baby cheek to be kissed, as a matter of course.

Chula was immensely interested in all she saw, calling the buzzards that make up the street cleaning department of the city, "big chickies," and crying "mula," as she stretched out her hand to the milk vendor, clattering by with his mule's back loaded with tin milk cans.

It was their last evening in Vera Cruz and the steamer was to sail at ten o'clock the next morning. Chula had just waved her little hand from the doorway, saying, "*Adios*," when the doctor entered the room, holding a packet of letters in one hand and a small box in the other.

"Since you have been so kind as to manifest an interest in the little child, I am wondering if you would care to look over the things the mother entrusted to my care.

This is her picture," and he held up the photograph of a delicate, pretty woman, of perhaps twenty-one or two. "And here is her husband, a fine fellow; it's a shame he should have lost his life as he did! You remember, the child's grandfather left home when he was very young and came to Mexico City, where he married shortly afterwards."

"Did he never communicate with his own people?" asked Mrs. Andrews.

"I think not, at least there are no letters to prove it. His one son was the father of little Chula."

"Where did his family live in the States?" asked Mr. Andrews suddenly.

"In the East, near Boston, I believe."

Mrs. Andrews gave an imperceptible start. Carita leaned forward, as if to interrupt, but her mother motioned her to silence. "Have you the name of the people?"

"Yes, somewhere—at least, I have the

child's birth certificate. While I run through the papers suppose you look over the trinkets; there may be something which will give a further clew."

She opened the package almost reverently and laid the little treasures, one after another on the table. There was a lock of hair set in a brooch, an old-fashioned buckle, a ruby ring, and at the bottom something wrapped in tissue paper. Her hand trembled as she began to unwrap it slowly—what was her amazement at finding a bracelet, set with a single opal.

"Oh, mother!" cried Carita, tense with excitement, "it's exactly like my bracelet, and how red the opal is! Do you suppose? Oh, could it be?"

There was no question about it—it was similar in every way, the chased band, the old-fashioned mounting, the raised clasp, with the hidden spring.

"Mi madre!" exclaimed Carita, "do you suppose?" she stopped, then began again, "do you suppose Chula can possibly be?" again she stopped.

Her mother finished the question, "Connected in any way with your Uncle Robert? I do not know, it is all so strange. See, Edward, this bracelet is the exact counterpart of the one Carita has in her possession."

She touched the hidden spring and, yes, there was the faded outline of a baby's face. Could it be Chula's father, her brother Robert's child?

Carita hid her head on her father's shoulder, overwhelmed at the great discovery and he smoothed the long black braid abstractedly, as he murmured, "Daddy's girl," and turned the matter over and over in his own mind.

If it was necessary to have any further proof, it was found, in black and white, in

the birth certificate, for there was Chula's name written plainly enough, "Eunice Dean."

"Eunice!" repeated Mrs. Andrews, turning whiter than ever; "that was mother's name, only hers was Eunice Dane."

"And Dane could easily have been corrupted into Dean," her husband replied, "an error of a careless clerk, or the poor fellow may have made the change himself." He turned to the astonished doctor. "There seems to be no doubt but that the child you have so kindly befriended is the granddaughter of my wife's brother who left home years ago. Ever since we have been in Mexico we have been trying to find some clew to his whereabouts but to be frank had, of late, given up."

Mrs. Andrews' eyes were wet as she expressed her thanks, showing him Carita's bracelet in proof of their assertions and ask-

ing him if he would be willing to surrender his charge to them.

"Indeed yes," he answered, although he had scarcely even then recovered from his amazement at the turn affairs had taken. "I cannot express my delight that the child has found her own people. Dame Fortune plays strange pranks."

"And we'll take her with us?" questioned Carita, finding it all hard to comprehend, "and she'll live with us always?" She drew a long breath. "And to think I have a really, truly cousin. How glad I am we didn't adopt an orphan."

Her mother's eyes were misty as she listened almost as in a dream, repeating over and over to herself, "Eunice Dane! mother's name—if only she could have lived!"

The next morning there was little time to talk over the wonderful discovery, Chula accepting everything quite as a matter of

course, and very naturally, for relationships don't worry a three-year-old child, and she only smiled at the added love and tenderness.

While Carita's heart was full of the new joy that had come into her life she could not forget her father was not going with them.

She clung to his hand, unreconciled to the parting, and so they went together to the busy wharf where the mob of cargadores were frantically gesturing and calling as they loaded and unloaded the cargoes of many steamers.

"You will come soon?" she asked with a suspicious quiver in her voice.

"As soon as ever I can," and he made an effort to appear cheerful.

"And you won't let the bandits hurt you?"

"Oh, no indeed, that mustn't trouble you for a moment," and his voice was reassuring as he pinned an American flag on Carita's jacket, saying as he did so, "Don't

forget, my dear, it is your flag and my flag, wherever we are, the same flag for us both."

At last the parting was over, the gang plank was pulled up, and Carita stood with her mother and baby Eunice, watching the Mexican shores slowly receding, her heart full of the hot resentment that anything should have happened to force them to leave the country she loved so well, and her great, splendid Daddy. Behind them was the Indian nurse, her face muffled mournfully in her rebozo; only her devotion to her beloved Chula had reconciled her to leave her native land.

So absorbed was Carita that at first she scarcely noticed a little hand tugging at her skirt. Looking down, she saw little Eunice, her face full of distress as she repeated over and over, "Mamacita, hurt! Chula sorry—Chula, kiss Mamacita!"

Stooping down, she picked the child up in

her arms and carried her to her steamer chair, repeating, "You darling! you blessed little cousin, whatever would I do without you?"

And so her mother found her, when she came up from the stateroom where she had been busy getting out the thick steamer clothes. And Mrs. Andrews smiled, little Eunice was already bringing happiness and comfort. Something in the child's expression as she looked up from Carita's lap, made her catch her breath with a smothered exclamation. "Yes, it was Robert's look!"

CHAPTER XXIII

THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER

IT was cold on deck and steadily growing colder ; after a little, the spray dashed in their faces and they were obliged to seek refuge in the cabin. They were steaming farther and farther from the sunny land of Mexico: a "norther" was sweeping down from the regions of ice and snow, the vessel rocked, and all but a few seasoned travelers were seasick. It was a welcome change when the wind swung round, and the air grew softer as they approached the West India Islands and came in sight of Cuba. Before them were the gray outlines of Morro Castle and, in the distance, was pointed out the place where the *Maine* was sunk.

The steamer was to make a three-hour stop

at Havana to take on a cargo of fruit and sugar, and Carita was delighted at her mother's proposal to go ashore, hurrying away to tell Angelica and Chula, who were not yet on deck.

It chanced to be a festival day, the bands were playing, the balconies gay with bunting; big palm leaves were tied to every doorpost, and there was a crush of automobiles and carriages on the principal streets. Chula shrank from the negroes they met, but laughed aloud at the pretty ladies in funny dresses that passed and repassed them. Entering into the carnival spirit, they bought confetti, scattering it as they rode through the streets, and Chula tooted a tin horn to her heart's content.

Altogether, it was a pleasant break in the journey, and, happier than they had been since they had left Mexico, they again boarded the steamer.

The remainder of the voyage, while cold, was bright and clear, and the air bracing; and Carita, well wrapped up in her steamer rug, would sit on deck for hours, with Eunice in her lap, watching the waves rippling in the sunshine. There was much to think about, the days of this strange journey. Already the pangs of sorrow at leaving the only home she had ever known were lessening and she was beginning to look forward with real pleasure to seeing her Aunt Emily, who had sent her so many beautiful presents. Then there were the girls and Felipe! There was school to think of, too, for she knew her mother would wish her to begin her studies as soon as possible. She must study hard so Daddy would be pleased. At this point the bothersome lump would always come in her throat and she would forget all her philosophy in rebellion at being every moment farther away from her father.

Chula was a favorite with all on shipboard, her quaint foreign ways, her attempts to pick up a few English words and her affectionate disposition attracting all alike. Once Carita found her in the Captain's cabin. Holding up her skirts and bobbing her curls in time to the music, she was taking graceful little dancing steps while a victrola played a popular one-step.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the Captain, "it's better than a darkey cake walk." Then, as he saw Carita's look of reproach, "Don't say a word, the child has a future before her!" and he applauded more vigorously than ever.

There were stormy, blustery days when it was almost impossible to stay on deck, and then, one morning, the sun shone again and they were excited at finding themselves off Sandy Hook, at the entrance of New York harbor. Soon they reached Ellis Island, where they were detained a few hours for

quarantine inspection, and then, with band playing, steamed up the harbor.

“Oh, Chula, see the big buildings!” cried Carita, as strange tall shapes began to loom up in the distance, which, even as she spoke, resolved themselves into the definite forms of skyscrapers. They passed Governor’s Island, where the child held out her arms to the “señorita” as she called the Goddess of Liberty, holding her torch to the sky.

The Stars and Stripes fluttered to the breeze. Carita’s thoughts went back to her father and that memorable Fourth of July when he had talked to her of the American flag. The quick tears came to her eyes and, turning to her mother, she cried, “Daddy was right, Mummy dear, it’s the most beautiful flag in the world!”

The band broke into the “Star Spangled Banner” and dozens of handkerchiefs fluttered in the air. What was it her father had

said, as he bade them good-by at Vera Cruz? She remembered his very tone, "It is your flag and my flag. Wherever we are, the same flag waves for us both."

In a moment she was waving her handkerchief with the rest and excitedly crying to the child standing beside her, "Wave, Chula, wave, it is your flag and my flag!"

Her heart beat faster as she realized, for the first time in her life, what it meant to be a citizen of the United States. Again her eyes wandered to the rippling flag, while Chula, still waving, repeated, "'Rah for the red, white and blue!"

They were now close to shore, the gang plank was being let down, and every one was eagerly scanning the faces of those on land in hope of seeing some relative or friend. Suddenly her mother darted forward:

"There's your Aunt Emily, over by the big post," and as Carita's eyes followed in the

direction indicated, she saw a slender woman in a trim tailored suit, waving frantically at her mother. While she reflected that her Aunt Emily was not at all the kind of a person she expected to see and immediately made up her mind that she should like her, her attention was attracted to a young fellow standing near her, waving his hat frantically.

"Mother!" she cried, fluttering her handkerchief in return, "there's Felipe. How do you suppose he knew we were coming? And," she gasped in astonishment, "Alice and Katharine are just behind him, and, oh, I do believe the big man next to Alice is Tom."

By this time Alice was pointing excitedly in their direction and Katharine was waving wildly.

Carita's heart gave a bound of joy at sight of the little crowd waiting to welcome them. All sense of strangeness left her, the clouds

showed only their silver linings. No longer did she and her mother seem to be coming to an unknown land but to a country full of happy promise where, with little Eunice, they could wait, in safety, until Daddy could come to them and they could make a new home in the United States under the Star Spangled Banner.

GLOSSARY

A Bordo, "All aboard."

Adios, "Good-by."

Adobe, Sun dried brick—unburnt—unbaked.

Alameda, Spanish for park—especially the principal park in Mexico City.

Amigo mio, My friend.

Aztecs, ancient Indian tribe of Mexico.

Belem, city jail.

Borda Gardens, magnificent formal gardens in the Italian style, still very beautiful, at Cuernavaca.

Brassero, Mexican stove for burning charcoal.

Buenos Días, "Good morning."

Bueno, an exclamation, meaning, good!

Bull Fight, the national sport, introduced into Mexico from Spain.

Calendar Stone, (Aztec) a huge stone, twelve feet in diameter and weighing over twenty tons, on the face of which is carved chronological and astronomical signs.

Carita, term of endearment meaning dearly beloved.

Carlos, Charles.

Carlotta, the ill-fated empress of Mexico during the French occupation, 1864-1867.

Centavo, Mexican coin, in value about one cent.

Chili or Chilli, a hot sort of pepper.

Chili Con Carne, chilis with minced meat.

Chihuahua, a state in the northern part of Mexico.

Chula, term of endearment, meaning "honey."

Chapultepec, Aztec for "Hill of the Grasshopper," where every ruler, from the ancient Montezuma, has had his summer residence in the palace.

Cortez, the Spaniard who conquered Mexico in 1619.

Cordoba, ancient Spanish town between Mexico City and Vera Cruz.

Cuernavaca, a charming Mexican town about seventy-four miles from Mexico City. A favorite resort for Americans.

Diaz, Don Porfirio, President of Mexico from 1884 to 1910.

Dulces, a name applied to all kinds of sweets and pastry.

Felices Pascuas, "Merry Christmas."

Felipe, Philip.

Fiestas, holidays.

Frijoles, beans, the great article of diet, eaten and served twice a day by rich and poor alike.

Gracias, Thanks.

Giovanni, John.

Gringos, a term of contempt applied to Americans, supposed to date from the Mexican war.

Guadalupe, a hill, just outside the city of Mexico where a noted shrine to the Virgin has been built.

Giulia, Julia.

Guadalajara, an important city in Mexico.

Hacienda, a great farming estate, in many ways resembling the feudal estate of Mediæval times.

Henrique, Henry.

Hieroglyphics, picture writing on the old ruins, much resembling that found on Egyptian monuments.

Hot Lands (tierra caliente), the low tropical country as distinguished from the plateau region.

Idols, stone images of old Aztec gods, even now often found when a street is being excavated. There are great quantities of these in the National Museum.

Jockey Club, the most exclusive club of Mexico City. Its exterior is unique as it is overlaid with blue and white tiles.

Maguey, known in the United States as the century plant. It grows in old Mexico in immense plantations. The sap is siphoned and ferments into "pulque," the intoxicating drink of Mexicans.

Mamacita, a term of endearment, meaning, "little mother."

Mango, a luscious slightly acid fruit grown in the

tropics. The extreme juiciness makes it difficult to eat and a mango fork is commonly used, the single prong of which is inserted in the soft end of its large stone.

Mas Importante, most important.

Mi madre, a term of endearment meaning, "my mother."

Mañana, to-morrow. Mexico had been called "the land of to-morrow."

Mantilla (Spanish), a graceful lace scarf still occasionally worn by the women of the higher classes.

Metate, the stone used in grinding corn for tortillas.

Maximilian, the ill-fated emperor during the French occupation, 1864-1867.

Muy Bien, "very well," an exclamation.

Montezuma, an ancient Aztec war-chief, "emperor" of Mexico at the time of the Spanish conquest.

Mozo, a driver.

Muchas Gracias, many thanks.

National Museum, the vast storehouse of the antiquities of the country.

National Palace, the official residence of the president that contains the state apartments. Over the main entrance is hung the liberty bell of Mexico.

Noche Triste Tree, an old cypress, a few miles from Mexico City, under which Cortez is supposed

to have wept when driven out of the city.
(Tree of the Dismal Night.)

Paseo, de la Reforma, a famous drive of two and one half miles from the statue of Charles IV (familiarily known as the Iron Horse) to Chapultepec Park.

Patio, interior courtyard open to the sky.

Peso, the Mexican dollar.

Pawn Shops, greatly flourish in Mexico, especially the Government Pawn Shop, instituted and supported by the Government to assist the poor.

Peon, the Mexican laborer, "the little brown man in the high peaked hat."

Pottery Vendor, a useful peddler who carries about loads of pottery which is much in demand, from the common clay dishes used for cooking to the highly decorated ware. Each part of the country has its distinctive kind of pottery.

Piñate, an oval jar crammed full of sweets and trinkets and decorated with tinsel and paper streamers to represent grotesque figures. The breaking of the piñate is described in the text.

Posadas, the Christmas celebration from the sixteenth to the twenty-fifth of December. The word means, "inn," and its origin is in the Bible narrative of the Nativity. It celebrates the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Pulque, a National drink.

Queretaro, one of the old towns in Mexico.

Quien Sabe, "who knows."

Rebozo or *Rebosa*, a kind of scarf worn by the women, thrown over their heads and around their shoulders.

Sala, reception room.

San Francisco Street, principal shopping street.

Señor, Sir.

Señora, Madam.

Señorita, Miss.

Siesta, the mid-day rest or nap—a custom in hot countries.

Sombrero, huge steeple-shaped hat worn by men.

Sugar Cane, is grown in many parts of Mexico. After the cane is harvested it is brought to great mills where the cane is crushed and the juice expressed. Most of the sugar haciendas now boast of modern equipment, although in some remote parts of the republic the primitive methods of the old Spaniards are still in use.

Tamales, minced meat and cornmeal, highly seasoned with pepper and chilis, wrapped in a corn husk and boiled.

Thieves' Market (Volador), a place where dishonestly acquired goods are offered for sale by ragged vendors.

Tilma, garment.

Tivoli Gardens, a park much used for fiestas.

Tortillas, the Mexican bread. Corn is soaked in lime water, then ground by the women between

two stones into a fine paste which is baked in thin cakes.

Viga, the old canal dating back to the time of Cortez, and the great trade route to the City of Mexico.

Vivienda, the Mexican word for apartment.

Water Carrier (aguador), the necessity for carrying the water from door to door no longer exists since the installment of the modern water system by President Diaz, yet the water carrier, with his great jar, is still seen occasionally and is one of the many picturesque sights of the capital.

Xolchicalco, the site of famous ruins not far from Cuernavaca.

Y Porque, Spanish exclamation meaning, "why?"

Zerape, or blanket, the most conspicuous article of dress worn by the laboring man. It is usually woven of bright colors.

Zocalo, a park in the center of the City of Mexico.

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